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The Lambeth Conference, 1958*

PHILIP CARRINGTON

THE report of the Lambeth Conference is now before us, and it is apparent that it is quite impossible to summarize it, or even to pick out "highlights" which would do justice to its great diversity; especially for those who passed through its life of worship, fellowship, discussion and decision. The "Report" is a record of the facts studied, the problems faced, the insights obtained, and the decisions made; but it gives no idea of the Conference itself; and possibly an article like this may serve a useful purpose by saying something about the nature of the Conference.

The holding of periodical conferences by bishops of the whole Anglican Communion was suggested in 1861 by the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada, at the first meeting of its Synod. It has served, since that day, to gather together, at intervals, the increasing number of Anglican bishops from various parts of the world, in Lambeth Palace, as guests of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to meet together and to pray together, and to face common problems. It is primarily a family reunion. It is not like a conference of scholars or specialists from whom some novel or sensational message may be expected to issue. The members are diocesan bishops, accustomed to the administrational and pastoral responsibility, which they exercise in fellowship with their clergy and designated laity; they are at once the holders of the episcopal commission, and the representatives of the people whom they serve. They exercise a paternal ministry within a conciliar church order. They have presided over their own synods or conventions. What is common to this body of men is a massive sense of responsibility. Their resolutions are not in the nature of laws or directives for the component churches; they have no legislative force; they are simply an expression of some opinions on which the Conference is largely in agreement; their expressions of opinion are likely to be marked by realism and broad commonsense and (one hopes) a Christian faith and understanding. We place them before our people for their study and consideration.

For the Conference is primarily concerned with the needs and progress of the churches which make up the Anglican Communion; but it thinks of itself as set in the midst of the modern world, and it stretches out its sympathies to include the study of "Conflicts between and within Nations," and the "Family in Contemporary Society." It also thinks of itself as part of the universal church of Christ, and devotes time and space to the subject of "Church Unity and the Church Universal." This aspect of its life was illuminated and strengthened by the presence on the first days of representa-

**The Lambeth Conference 1958: The Encyclical Letter from the Bishops together with the Resolutions and Reports:* S.P.C.K. and Seabury Press.

tives from various churches who gave friendly greetings; from the Scandinavian Churches, the German Evangelical Church, the Church of Scotland, the Free Churches in England, the Old Catholics, the Orthodox Church (including the Oecumenical Patriarch, the Church of Russia, the Church of Rumania, the Church of Bulgaria, and the Russian Orthodox Church in London) and the Armenian Church. These visitors were also with us for the opening services, the great service in Canterbury Cathedral at which the Archbishop addressed us from the chair of St. Augustine, and the service of Holy Communion at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, at which all the bishops received communion together, and we heard a sermon from Bishop Mukerjee of Calcutta, the Metropolitan of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon.

The sessions took place in the great hall of Lambeth Palace with the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Chair, and we all learned to love and respect him for his personal interest in every member of the Conference, and for the masterly and sympathetic manner in which he presided and managed the business of the Conference. Among the visiting bishops, Henry Sherrill, the Presiding Bishop of our Church in the U.S.A., had an equal place of honour in our midst. But who could list the eminent names in such an assembly? Names like G. K. A. Bell, Michael Yashiro, Angus Dun, and Lakdasa de Mel, come to our minds, but the list could be extended indefinitely.

While we were not a meeting of scholars and intellectuals, that does not mean that we had no scholars or intellectuals to guide us; and the subject given to the first committee was a theological one, "The Bible, its Authority and Message," its Chairman being the Archbishop of York, Michael Ramsay. This Report will probably interest the readers of the *Canadian Journal of Theology*; but it might be well to explain that none of the Reports receive the imprimatur of the Conference; they are received as the work of the Committee, and printed in the Report for study.

This Report begins by contrasting the world in which the Bible appeared, and the language in which it is written, with the modern world and the language of a scientific age; it asserts, however, that the Bible has a message for the modern world. It then proceeds to place the Bible in its relation to the church, within which its canon took form; it concludes that this process of canonization was part of the development of the primitive church itself, along with the development of the creeds and the apostolic ministry; it is a part of the same historic tradition. This historic view does not place the church "over" the Bible, however, but "under" it, in the sense that the process of canonization did not confer authority on the books, but recognized that they possessed authority. Then follows an examination of the work of modern criticism the value of which is gratefully acknowledged; it refers to what might be called the older school of "evolutionary liberalism," and then to the more positive modern movement known as "biblical theology;" after

which it takes up the difficult subjects of the Bible as the Word of God, the truth of God in the Bible and the inspiration of the revelation which it contains; these paragraphs should be carefully studied by those who are interested.

The next section relates the Bible to what might be described as its own inner historical background; it presents the drama of God's revelation of himself in Israel and in the church through the ages; after which it relates that Biblical record to the formulation of doctrine in the church. "The creeds summarize it; the church expounds it; but it is from the Bible that every right exposition of it derives." The final section is called "The Church Living by the Bible," and relates it to the present situation. It deals with the position of the Bible in the worship of the church, where it has always held a dominant position in Anglicanism; and it pays a tribute to the "liturgical movement." From that point it proceeds to the thought of the reading of the Bible as a "means of grace" in the life of the individual and the family, and in groups who read it together sharing their understanding of its message. It then considers the task of confronting the world with the Bible message of the righteous God, and with the teaching and person of Jesus Christ, laying considerable stress on the moral law, the moral teaching of Christ, and the personal knowledge of Christ through the Holy Spirit. A final section deals with the presentation of the Biblical message today. This ranges from the power of a full witness to the whole Biblical faith in preaching and in liturgy, to the power of a church in the community, living its life in this world in accordance with the full Biblical faith; it concludes by recommending various ways in which the Biblical faith can be translated into terms which will make it easier for the modern world to understand it.

If this summary is inadequate, how much more will be an attempt to deal, even more briefly, with the remaining subjects. The second Report, on "Church Unity and the Church Universal," surveys a large field. Its Chairman was the Bishop of Chelmsford, Allison. It repeats and interprets the Anglican approach to the subject, in connection with which it takes up the somewhat technical point of degrees of intercommunion. It suggests that in the case of churches in which no impediment exists, the term "full communion" should be used, rather than "full intercommunion," the word "intercommunion" being reserved for those cases in which there are limitations. It also envisages the idea of a conference for episcopal churches with which there is "full communion" or "intercommunion," which should be a very fruitful development. It then takes the question of the Church of South India, with which there has been progress in the matter of "intercommunion" in the case of several provinces of the Anglican Communion. There is a very full study of the plans for church union in North India and Pakistan, and in Ceylon; in the latter case it looks as if there would be "full communion" from the beginning; in the former, there are a number of uncertainties in which connection suggestions are made. I think we may say

that we were hopeful about this plan, and it was a great pleasure and privilege to listen to our Indian bishops on the subject; we pray that God's blessing may rest upon all who are working towards these ends. There are also sections on the conversations with the Presbyterians in Scotland, and the Methodists in the U.S.A., and with certain approaches in West Africa and in the Jerusalem Archbishopric.

The Report then surveys our relations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the other Eastern Churches, the Old Catholic Churches, the Lutheran Churches, the Reformed Churches, the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church, the Lusitanian Church, and the Philippine Church, concluding with a section on the Ecumenical Movement and the World Council of Churches. It will be seen that this Report will be a valuable one for reference.

The Third Report is on "Progress in the Anglican Communion." The Committee was divided into three, the first of which dealt with Missionary Appeal and Strategy (Chairman the Bishop of Connecticut, Gray); its report is mostly concerned with interrelations and coordination within the Communion throughout the world. The second dealt with the Book of Common Prayer (Chairman the Archbishop of Dublin, Simms). The Prayer Book is in the process of revision in many parts of the world (including Canada). It is obviously advisable that there should be some coordination on this subject, and the committee addressed itself to this subject, and attempted to analyze the position and authority of the Prayer Book as a standard of doctrine and worship, and a bond of unity. The Report deals with a number of features of the liturgy in their relation to the Anglican tradition, and in the light of modern liturgical knowledge; it ends with a consideration of the proposals made in many places (including Canada) to enrich the calendar by extending the number of commemorations and continuing them down to modern times.

A third section in this report (Chairman the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Bradford) deals with "Ministries and Manpower" in view of the shortage of clergy and the new kinds of needs in the world today. It faces such questions as the place of the deacon in the Anglican ministry, and the ordination of men who do not give their whole time to the church's work.

The Fourth Report on "Conflicts between and within Nations" was under the Chairmanship of the Archbishop of Capetown (deBlank), and deals fully with the case of conflict between two races living side by side, and also the problem of war and its causes. In this connection, it takes up the question of nuclear weapons, and confesses to a division of opinion on the question whether their use is "morally indefensible;" it falls back on the phrase "repugnant to the Christian conscience;" it urges that their manufacture should be abolished. The Report also points out that conflict between nations is often due to great differences in standards of wealth and living; and this can only be remedied by a greater degree of sharing.

The fifth and last Report (Chairman the Bishop of Olympia, Bayne) deals with the "Family in Contemporary Society." It begins by putting forward a Biblical theology of marriage, according to which it is indeed ordained for the procreation of children, but that is not its sole purpose; while this is, as it were, the sacrament of the union, the union itself has two other purposes, the right relation between husband and wife, and the creation of a home as a stable environment in which the highest human values can be realized. This union is, by God's ordinance, life-long.

The Report goes on to consider the question of family-planning, in which it is legitimate to include such measures of control as may be agreed by husband and wife in Christian conscience. This is followed by discussions on the family in the modern world from many points of view, ranging from Central Africa at one end of the scale to the highly industrialized community at the other. It deals with a number of problems which may affect the family, and builds up a picture of a Christian home which lives according to the faith and teaching of Christ and his church.

At the beginning of the Report is a list of 311 Bishops attending; an "Encyclical Letter to the Faithful in Jesus Christ," which picks out some of the main points of the Reports and Resolutions; and a "Message" which was to be read in Anglican Churches throughout the world in October.

Our Conference concluded with a service of Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey, at which we gave thanks for our fellowship in the Lord, and prayed for his blessing on our labours. The sermon was preached by Bishop Sherrill, Presiding Bishop in the U.S.A., who told us to remember that our work was personal and pastoral, and that what we had to do was to preach the gospel and look after the people committed to our care. We then said good-bye to one another in the cloisters of the Abbey. What no one can express or describe is the feeling we had for the friends we had made from all parts of the world, and the quiet confidence which possessed every heart that the Lord was with us.

The Bible as Problem and Answer

THROUGHOUT the centuries, innumerable members of the Christian and Jewish churches have found in the Bible the answer to their needs. They say that God speaks through this book and that it has been to them the Word of God. Readings from a daily lectionary, texts from a scripture calendar, a verse that appears when the book is opened at random, have changed and directed their lives. Many would say with Fr. Charles de Foucauld that in the immense treasury of scripture every soul has a verse or some verses which God has inspired for that one specially.

But the Bible has also been a problem. Our libraries are filled with the products of seemingly endless arguments about text and date and authorship, as well as the wider problems of authority and interpretation. Men have fought bitterly over the Bible and still do, and we are tempted to wonder whether the Bible is an answer only to the blessedly ignorant, while to the learned it is a burden and a problem.

The Bible is both problem and answer. When men become learned in the scriptures they know them as a problem, but they need not thereby cease to know them as an answer. If the Bible ceases to be for them the Word of God it is not because of their learning but despite it or for some other reason. To struggle with the problems of the Bible should enrich our understanding of the way in which it is the Word of God, and if we are not prepared to struggle, but wish to make it a magic book to produce answers that we have not worked for, God will deal with us in judgement. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns spoke of sitting down with a lexicon and rising up amid the glory of God. From those who know how to sit down with a lexicon, God is likely to exact that price for the illumination of his glory.

Yet to the learned as to the simple, God's word in scripture will always be mysterious and unpredictable. Helmut Gollwitzer, the theologian at Bonn, is not unskilled in the scriptures, but in his diary from a Russian prison camp he tells how, removed from his books and from the atmosphere of learning, simple Bible texts spoke to him as directly as they do to an old peasant woman. The Word of God is not bound by our ignorance, such is His condescension. It is not even bound by our learning, such is His power.

The following four articles about problems connected with the Holy Scriptures were read at the annual meeting of the Canadian Theological Society, May 14–15, 1958, at Wycliffe College, Toronto. The fifth article is the Presidential Address delivered by Professor George B. Caird to the Canadian Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, May 13, 1958, in Wycliffe College. We trust that these articles are sufficiently learned and hope that they will not impede but rather aid the hearing of the Word.

D.M.M.

Scripture in Tradition

EUGENE R. FAIRWEATHER

I

NO prophetic scripture allows a man to interpret it by himself" (II. Pet. 1:20). For many Christians this is a hard saying. It may be a commonplace that Scripture is a norm for faith and practice. But what we forget so easily is that this norm—law and prophets, Old Testament and New Testament alike—took shape within a community and expresses the concerns and standards of that community. Yet it is beyond question that Scripture originated within the community of Israel, Old and New, and that it exists to testify to the community's fundamental faith. It is addressed to believers in community, and the community is the place where we must listen to it if we expect to hear its real message. When we approach the problem of biblical authority, then, we cannot help asking at the outset how that authority is related to the authority of the believing and witnessing Church itself, and whether it is shared with other organs of authority within the Church.

We may usefully start by reviewing the essential facts, about which there is fortunately little room for serious argument. While it may not be possible to describe in full detail the respective roles of oral tradition and written document in the development of Scripture as we know it, it is clear that the Hebrew Scriptures are the term of a long process of crystallization of tradition within the community of the Old Covenant, and that their various elements are meant to bear witness in different ways to God's covenant with Israel and to the faith believed and the life lived by his people within that covenant. Similarly, when the New Covenant has been sealed in the blood of Christ, the Christian witness to God's re-creative act is formulated in a communal tradition, and it is this tradition, first communicated by word of mouth in the apostolic proclamation of God's wonderful works in Christ, that is written down, edited, collected, commented upon, in Gospels, Acts, Epistles, Apocalypse. The process is lucidly described by K. E. Skydsgaard:

> If we are . . . to ask how the gospel of Jesus Christ was heard and spread in these first times, the answer must be: through oral tradition where those men who had been especially commissioned as apostles proclaimed the message to those who followed them. Through many years there was preaching and baptism and celebration of the Eucharist before the congregations received a collection of the gospels and apostolic letters as a permanent expression of the voice of the apostles from the early days when foundations were being laid.
>
> From this brief and summary presentation, it will appear that there was actually a time when the tradition truly played a very essential role, not only in the periphery, but in the very center of the Christian life. The congregation was, as Luther at one time said, not a 'pen house' but a 'mouth house'. Before there was scripture, there was oral tradition; before there was a New Testament,

there was a church; before men wrote, they spoke, they confessed, they baptized, and they held Holy Communion.

In the midst of this living, oral witness, in the midst of the life of this early church, our New Testament arose. . . . Scripture was the deposit of the apostolic voice which was heard in the primitive church and behind which stood the living Lord himself.[1]

The problem of the relation between the living community and the written monuments of its tradition emerges directly enough from all this, but two further observations may sharpen our awareness of it. On the one hand, the first, prescriptural tradition of the apostolic Church appeals to something already written and venerated, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as an accepted element in its total witness to Christ. Thus we have the concept of "scripture" ready-made for the Church to take up in the formation of a new canon. On the other hand, the very nature of the New Covenant in Christ points to the reality of a fellowship with God, more perfect than that enjoyed by the "fathers." Thus, in assessing the role of Scripture in the Church, we shall have to allow for the new significance of the latter as the Spirit-filled community, bearing corporate witness to God's truth. "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear" (Acts 2:32f.). Such a claim suggests that the primitive Church's fairly explicit idea of biblical authority is matched by a strong sense of the living witness and authority of the Spirit in the Church, which gives new meaning to inherited concepts of oral tradition.

The real trouble starts when we attempt a theological interpretation of the situation which I have just been describing. Granted that the canon represents a writing-down of the substance of the apostolic tradition or proclamation, just how exhaustive or exclusive is this definitive record? How far, for instance, has the Church inhibited itself from any further exercise of doctrinal authority, by acknowledging the New Testament writings as a unique canon? Is the biblical witness to be thought of as in some sense "over the Church?" Does this particular embodiment of the apostolic witness possess sole authority, to the exclusion of all other exercise of apostolic authority in the Church? None of these questions can be answered simply on the basis of our brief historical survey. Rather, we shall need to reflect theologically on the nature of the Church and its institutions, and to ask more particularly how the primitive Church's consciousness of its essential nature was reflected in its accounts of the communication of Christian truth. Then, against this background, we can attempt a fresh appraisal of the Church's developing institutions.

II

The basic presupposition of any adequate theological discussion of the nature of the Church is the concept of the Body of Christ. Unless we

1. Kristen E. Skydsgaard, *One in Christ* (Philadelphia, 1957), pp. 59–61.

apprehend the continuity of God's purpose and action in Christ and his Church, we shall miss the deepest meaning of the Church's life. I suggest that to think of the Church as Christ's Body is in the first place to interpret it sacramentally, as the creaturely but divinely formed embodiment of God's gracious action, analogous to the humanity of the incarnate Word. More exactly, it is to think of the Church as sacrament of Christ, enshrining the very life of the God-Man in its visible common life. As deity is enshrined in manhood in Christ, so the divine-human Lord tabernacles in his Church —not indeed in precisely the same mode, but in what Thomist philosophers have taught us to call an analogy of proper proportionality. From this it follows that the Church, in its life and action, neither repeats what Christ has done once for all nor performs an essentially new and different function. Rather, in the power of the Spirit it represents and applies Christ's divine-human action for the redemptive incorporation of human persons into Christ. It also follows that the divine purpose is accomplished in the Church through active human response, just as the divine work of redemption was carried out through the human obedience of Christ, and that this response involves outward, visible, fleshly realities, which reflect the fleshliness of Christ's life of obedience and redemptive sacrifice.

In the light of this fundamental doctrine of the Church, we shall expect to find the definitive revelation in Christ represented in the Church through a corporate human response, concretely embodied in patterns of action and social institutions. Our problem, of course, is to find out what these institutions are and to see how they are related to each other in the Church's corporate life. The right approach to the problem is not easy to determine, but it seems clear enough that we must go beyond a direct study of "Scripture," "Tradition," and related terms as they appear in the New Testament and other early Christian writings. For one thing, the New Testament Scriptures can scarcely be a factor in the New Testament's own account of the Christian revelation and its transmission.[2] But every primitive Christian institution presents the same kind of problem; coming as it does from the early phases of the community's growth, much of our relevant material tells us more of act and procedure than of fact and institution, even if fundamental institutions do appear in rudimentary form. It looks, then, as if at least a cursory examination of the early Church's functional description of its living response to the divine truth would be part of our task. Such a study would certainly teach us something about the primitive Church's understanding of its calling to make known the manifold wisdom of God, and in this way would help us to penetrate more deeply into the meaning of Christian institutions. And perhaps we should also come to see a bit more clearly how some of these institutions took shape as the divinely ordained instruments of the Church's essential functions.

If space permitted, we could profitably undertake a fairly extensive study

2. II Pet. 3:16 is the only clear reference *to New Testament* "Scriptures" *in* the New Testament.

of the vocabulary of the New Testament. The primitive Christian use of such terms as *kerygma*, *euangelion*, *martyria*, *homologia*, *paradosis*, and their cognate verbs, would tell us a good deal about the early Church's self-understanding. For the present, however, we shall have to limit ourselves to one set of terms, as a sample of the whole. Since the concept of "witness" is one of the most comprehensive of the lot, I propose to look at the New Testament use of the words, *martyrein*, *martys*, *martyria*, and *martyrion*. Although the language of "witness" is most extensively used in the Johannine corpus (including the Apocalypse), it plays a sufficiently significant part in other strata of the New Testament literature to justify the hope that its principal occurrences in the New Testament will tell us enough to meet our immediate needs.

The primary *martys*, the pattern of all true witness, is Christ himself. In him the divine truth, the object of all witness, is incarnate in its fullness, and he bears his own witness to it in act and word. He is "the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead," and "the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation" (Rev. 1:5; 3:14). He bears witness to heavenly things, which he has seen (John 3:11ff., 31ff.). He came into the world "to bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37), and "in his testimony before Pontius Pilate [he] made the good confession" (I Tim. 6:13).

Christ is not, however, alone in his *martyria*. The divine purpose to which he witnesses both prepares his way and sustains his witness. The Father himself testifies through the works which bear the marks of the divine presence and power (John 5:31ff.; 10:25). In and after Christ's glorification the Spirit bears witness to him (John 15:26), in union with the visible witness of water and blood (I John 5:7ff.). Moreover, through the inspiration of the Spirit the Scriptures of the law and the prophets testified to Christ before his advent (John 5:39; Acts 10:43; Rom. 3:21; Hebr. 7:17; 10:15), and at the end of the prophetic line John the Baptist came "to bear witness to the light" (John 1:6ff.). Finally, in the fullness of time, the Christian fellowship bears witness to what it has seen and heard.

Within the Christian fellowship, the primary witnesses are the "apostles." or specially commissioned preachers of Christ, whose witness is closely linked to the witness of the Spirit. "When the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me; and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26f.; cf. Acts 1:8, 22; 2:32; 4:33; 10:42; 22:15; 23:11; I Cor. 15:15). By signs and wonders the Lord himself bears witness to the word of his grace, spoken by the apostles (Acts 14:3). An eyewitness bears his testimony to the reality of Christ's death (John 19:35), while the seer of Patmos witnesses to the vision of his coming in glory (Rev. 1:1f.; cf. 19:10). More generally, those who have seen and heard bear witness to the total manifestation of the Word of eternal life (I John 1:1–4) in the sending of the Son to be the Saviour of the world (I John 4:14). In turn, this testimony is confirmed in the life

and experience of the whole community (I Cor. 1:6), and the "good confession" in which Christ bore witness to the truth is reflected in the good confession of Timothy and of all Christians who acknowledge and follow "the apostle and high priest of our confession" (I Tim. 6:12f.; Hebr. 3:1). While one text refers specifically to the writing-down of the testimony (John 21:24f.), several point to its living embodiment in the faithfulness of Christians through suffering and death (Rev. 2:13; 11:3, 7f.; 12:11; 17:6; 20:4; Acts 22:20). We can hardly overlook the support given to a Christological view of the Church and its witness by such a recognition of the witness borne in the very life and death of Christians, whose sufferings in the flesh "complete what remains of Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (Col. 1:24). The truth which became flesh in Christ not only speaks through the witness of the apostles but also enters into the flesh and blood of all who receive that witness.

In all this we have at least a sketch of a complex divine-human action of *martyria*. On the one side, God, the heavenly Christ, and the Spirit, and on the other side, Christ's words and works, the water and the blood, the law and the prophets, the Forerunner and the Bride, the apostles and martyrs, are portrayed as bearing harmonious witness to truth as it is in Jesus. The divine witness is, so to speak, the inward and spiritual grace of which human witness is the outward and visible sign. And while that outward and visible witness finds its centre in Christ the incarnate Word, the Church, with its apostles and its martyrs, its prophets and its Scriptures, is an integral part of an indivisible whole.

While this brief essay in elementary word-study still leaves us without a clear definition of the role of the New Testament in the Church, it must at least have made it plain that the New Testament does belong to the Church by theological right, and not simply by historical origin. Once we have caught even a glimpse of the Church as Christ's Body, united to him in being and action and bearing witness to his truth, we shall never be able to think of the New Testament as something external to the Church and passively received by the Church. On the contrary, we shall see the New Testament as part of the Church's witness—perhaps a uniquely authoritative part, but still a part.

III

We must now look again at the way in which the Church's witness found institutional embodiment, and more particularly at the place of the New Testament in this institutional development. To start with, we should observe that at the beginning of Christian history authority within the witnessing community belongs primarily to persons rather than to books. The principal agents of the primitive Church's witness are the apostles, and the medium of their witness is oral *kerygma* or *paradosis*, which (we should also note) seems to have found its first formal expression in quasi-credal statements rather than in "Scripture." It is true that we not only find a bit

of the *kerygma* written down by way of reminder (I Cor. 15:1–5), but also possess two quite early allusions to the writing-down of the story of Christ (Luke 1:1–4; John 21:24f.). But we can hardly argue from such slender evidence for the existence in the primitive community of any serious notion of Christian Scriptures, especially since we have to set on the other side the incidental and non-oracular character of the bulk of the New Testament.[3] "So then, brethren," St. Paul writes, "stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter" (II Thess. 2:15). The new and living teaching of the apostolic Church is given in personal communication, sometimes oral, sometimes written, and we have no reason to suppose that even the written tradition is thought of as "Scripture" in any technical sense.

As for the primitive Church's use of the only Scriptures it possessed—the Scriptures of the Old Covenant—it seems fair to say that the possession of these documents did not seriously affect the primacy of "apostolic tradition." However great the Church's reverence for them may have been, and however important they were to prove as a precedent for a "New Testament," their effective authority was significantly qualified by the way in which the Church interpreted them. When the teachers of the New Testament Church appealed to the Old Testament as a witness to the Christian Gospel, the testimony to Christ which these Christians discovered was not something that any casual Jewish reader was likely to find in his Scriptures, whatever the methodological similarities between rabbinic and Christian exegesis. On the contrary, as St. Paul puts it in a statement of what he clearly regards as essential theological principle, "to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away" (II Cor. 3:14). In other words, if there is a witness to Christ in the Old Testament, it is not perceptible in the "letter," "carnally" read, but must be identified "spiritually" or, as we might say, "typologically." But this amounts to saying that the apostolic Church only found what it regarded as an adequate understanding of its Scriptures by way of a principle external to the literal, historical meaning of law and prophets. Early Christians had no illusions about the perspicuity of Scripture apart from Tradition!

The real basis, then, of the primitive Church's faith is the direct experience of the chosen witnesses. "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us" (I John 1:3). It is obvious, however, that the disappearance of direct oral report will have presented a serious problem. Papias provides a famous example of what must have been a widespread reaction to the new situation. "I did not think," he writes, just at the point when direct testimony is irrevocably passing over into hearsay, "that I could get so much profit from the contents of books as from the utterances of a living and abiding voice".[4] Nonetheless,

3. The author of the Johannine Apocalypse did take his writing very seriously, but this is characteristic of the apocalyptic *genre* as such.
4. *Ap.* Eusebius, *HE*, III, 39, 3.

as time went on greater attention was inevitably paid to the written record, as the most complete, explicit and reliable embodiment of the apostolic *paradosis*. By the last quarter of the second century we have evidence for the existence of an almost complete New Testament collection, acknowledged as an authoritative repository of the apostolic witness.

Our evidence also suggests, however, that other repositories of that witness were still recognized. Side by side with the apostolic Scriptures, our most articulate informants place the apostolic rule of faith and the apostolic Bishops in the apostolic Churches. Irenaeus, for example, not only testifies to the fourfold Gospel, but also emphasizes the unity of faith maintained in the Churches apart from the written Word and appeals to the continuous witness of the apostolic Churches, embodied in the succession of their chief pastors and teachers.[5] This kind of evidence seems to point to two conclusions. (*a*) The same age which testifies to the canon of apostolic Scripture also claims authority for the apostolic Church, and more particularly for its apostolic Ministry. (*b*) The writers of this age do not so much as hint that the canon, once defined, will exclude all exercise of authority by this second inheritor of the apostolic witness and commission. On the contrary, they insist that the apostolic Scriptures must be interpreted in the context of a larger apostolicity, from which they are essentially inseparable. The real basis of the Church's faith remains the witness of the apostolate in the Church, and this witness has more than one organ of expression.

When we reflect on the historical development of "apostolic" institutions in the Church in the light of our theological apprehension of the Church's life and witness in Christ, it becomes exceedingly hard to justify any extravagant exaltation of Scripture "over the Church," even by the most skilful ringing of the changes on the theme of the "Word of God." The Word of God who is Jesus Christ, the God-Man, is indeed over the Church, as the Head of the Body. But Christ has united the Church to himself by his Spirit, and through the same Spirit he guides it into his truth and maintains it in the truth. Beyond question, the biblical "Word" is one of the creaturely means through which the Spirit of truth speaks to the Church and preserves it in the apostles' doctrine, but it does not follow that it can rightly be treated as the exclusive means to this end, let alone separated from the Church in which it took form. No doubt there is a sense in which not only Scripture, but also credal rule of faith, sacramental signs and ministerial order, are over the Church, in so far as they represent an apostolic heritage to which the faith and worship and polity of the ongoing Church must be consistently faithful. Nonetheless, all these primary Christian institutions are given to us in and with the Church, whose common life they help to form; they have no meaning apart from that common life; and no one of them can be exclusively elevated above the corporate structure of the Church. To set one of them over against the others, instead of seeing them as a functional whole, is to ignore the lessons of the Church's primitive historical develop-

5. Cf. Irenaeus, *AH*, I, 10, 1–2; III, 1–4; III, 11, 8.

ment, while to lift any one of them out of its proper place in the Church's common life is in effect to separate the Church from Christ its Head, who speaks to it in its Scriptures, renews its life in its Sacraments, and orders it by its Ministry.

If, however, we emphasize the churchly context of Scripture and its interpretation, we are bound to try to say how we understand the exercise of the Church's expository authority. I suggest—there is no room to do more—that we must explore the way in which the apostolic witness in Scripture and Creed is complemented by the apostolic commission of the Ministry, and primarily by the authority of the episcopate. Here is an institution which embodies a living apostolic commission and, perpetually renewed as it is through the incorporation into it of living persons, uniquely meets the need for a "living and abiding voice." It was this above all that gave the Ecumenical Councils their theological significance as authoritative interpreters of the apostolic witness. Difficult as it may be to determine the details of its working, I do not see how we can help affirming this corporate authority of the bearers of the apostolic commission in the exposition of the apostolic Scriptures.

But are we not in danger of subjecting history to dogma, once we make such an admission? On the contrary, I suspect that it is a too simple and exclusive biblicism that is most likely to try to find all its favourite dogmas expressed *totidem verbis* in Scripture. For my part, I have no sympathy with any attempt to read developed Catholic dogma into the New Testament text. I am simply suggesting that we should follow the analogy of the New Testament Church's treatment of the Old Testament, and look for the Godgiven sense and direction of Scripture in those crucial themes of the New Testament message which have found a continuation in the Catholic Creeds and other expressions of the Church's living mind. In one way or another, all of us who recognize the authority of that strange and diverse compilation which we call the Bible are going to do our best to find the unity of the Spirit beneath the diversity of the letter. Which, then, is better: to impose our private visions of unity on the diversity of the text, or to rely on the guidance of the Paraclete in that fellowship of the Holy Spirit through which God has given us the lively oracles of the New Covenant?

Biblical and Systematic Theology

DONALD MATHERS

BIBLICAL and Systematic Theology have not always been distinguished one from the other as they are today. At many of our older universities there are chairs of Divinity whose occupants were formerly expected to teach something which was neither exactly Biblical nor Systematic Theology but, in a vague way, both. The two subjects were naïvely identified, and it was only later that they fell apart. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the influence of rationalistic criticism imparted to the special Biblical study a tone of hostility to the general theological one. From its beginnings until recently Biblical Theology has generally attempted to be impartial, non-dogmatic, scientific, historical and strongly critical of traditional orthodoxy, but in our own time the words Biblical Theology have come to represent almost the opposite intention. While recognizing the value of objective, scientific study, the Biblical Theologian of today wishes to interpret the Bible as the canonical document of a believing community in which he stands, and to recognize that it was written in and for that community. He sees the Bible as a book that demands a verdict and to which he wishes to give a believing and obedient Christian verdict.

Biblical Theology has in fact turned out to be a poor instrument for the attack on dogmatics, and systematic theologians are bound to welcome the renewed interest of Biblical scholars in traditional theological questions. But they are bound also to recognize that it makes necessary a definition of boundaries and a discussion of the mode of cooperation. It is unlikely that there can be any return to the old "Divinity"; certainly not if that means a return to the innocence of the pre-critical period. Earlier Protestants were able to dispose of this problem with a wave of the hand since they believed that the Bible itself contained a systematic theology. W. B. Pope, the Canadian-born Methodist theologian, could still say blithely in 1875 that "when the development of divine doctrine ceased, the development of human dogma began,"[1] but contemporary Protestants cannot unload the problem so easily. We do not regard the Biblical revelation as being the transmission of divine doctrine, even a developing divine doctrine. Nor do we suppose that the propositions of theology are always of the same logical order as the highly diverse materials of the Biblical documents. We do indeed seem to believe that in some sense Biblical Theology is logically and temporally prior to Systematic Theology. We talk of Systematic Theology building on the foundations of Biblical Theology or using its "assured results," but we know also that Prof. Norman Porteous was uncomfortably close to the truth when he wrote in a recent paper of how the Biblical Theologian sometimes seems

1. W. B. Pope, *Compendium of Theology* (London, 1880), vol. 1, p. 230.

to tip the confused and confusing results of his study over the wall into the garden of the Systematic Theologian to let him make such sense of them as he can.[2]

One historical change that underlies this situation is the development of the critical study of the Biblical documents. But another, which is also of importance, is the philosophical criticism of rationalist metaphysics which we associate with the name of Immanuel Kant. It is the effect of this philosophical revolution on the relation of Biblical to Systematic Theology that I wish to examine.

Pre-critical metaphysics was accustomed to define itself by the oracular phrase "the science of being as such" or "the science of pure being." Its intention was by rational means to establish propositions whose object was not any particular being but simply being. The definition of theology which would correspond to this would be that theology is "the science of God" whose intention is to establish, either by rational means, or on the basis of revelation, propositions about God as He is in Himself. Traditional, pre-critical metaphysics therefore finds as its counterpart a Natural Theology conceived as the philosophic establishment of truths about God, and Revealed Theology conceived as the exposition of truths about God not capable of being established by human reason but transmitted by God to His Church in revelation. On this view, the function of Systematic Theology would be the coordination into one system of propositions about God derived from various sources, and for this purpose propositions from Biblical Theology and dogmas of the Church (both regarded as revealed truths) were treated as being of the same logical order as truths established by reason.

It must be accounted one of the curiosities of the history of Protestant Theology that classical metaphysics survived the Reformation at all. Luther and Calvin ought to have killed it and perhaps believed that they had done so. But whatever the reason, it was not the Reformers, but Kant who dealt the death blow to speculative metaphysics in Protestant theology, and he did so, not in the name of revelation, but in the name of natural science.

Everyone knows how Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason* denied that God could be an object of knowledge, denied the legitimacy of the proofs of God's existence, and allowed to God only the tenuous existence of an Idea of Reason. People today often speak of God as a psychological projection, the embodiment of our felt desires and needs. Kant gave God the status of a logical projection, something which men can never know but can never stop thinking about, a question which men must ask but cannot answer.[3]

No one need wonder that Kant's teaching caused a scandal among conservative Protestants. What is remarkable is that it came to be all but universally accepted in the Protestant world within a generation or two, so that people might wish to go "back to Kant" or "on from Kant" but could not

2. *Oudtestamentische Studien*, VIII, p. 3.
3. *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xxviii ff.

ignore him or hope to return behind him, and that Kant himself even came (however misleadingly) to be called "the Protestant philosopher." Prof. Gilson might comment that the Protestants had no alternative; that there are only two pure philosophical positions, that of Aquinas and that of Kant, and if you will not learn from St. Thomas to Kant you must go.[4] But there is another possible explanation: that however desiccated Kant's adult religion may have been, however unacceptable to the church the substitute theology which he formulated, yet he was brought up a Protestant and there was something not inappropriate to the Protestant understanding of things in the limitation that he placed upon pure, theoretic reason. He found it necessary to deny reason to make room for *glaube*, and if *glaube* meant for him something very different from what it meant for his neighbour Hamann or his Pietist mother and father, it is not in the least difficult to suppose that he knew what that difference was. There is in fact a real parallel between Kant's attack on metaphysics and the Reformation attacks on natural theology. However else they may differ, Kant and Luther agree that no knowledge of God can be gained by inference from nature.[5] If Kant believed that it was an offence against scientific decorum to seek to extend the field of human knowledge to include God, Luther regarded it as blasphemy to attempt a "theology of glory." The same is true for Calvin. It is not simply sin and the fall that limit our knowledge of God. If He is to be known to us, He must accommodate Himself to our finite comprehension. "It is no accident," says Edward Dowey in his fine book on Calvin, "that the *Institutes*, from the first edition to the last, opens with the category of knowledge, 'the knowledge of God and ourselves,' not speculations about being or existence. Calvin is here a kind of Kant, an epistemologist not a metaphysician, with reference to God and the world."[6]

If Kant destroyed traditional metaphysics in the Protestant world, he likewise destroyed the old Divinity as a unified study. It has never been successfully practised since, but has fallen apart into Biblical Criticism, Biblical Theology, Systematic Theology, Philosophy of Religion, Apologetics and so on, studies whose interrelations have perplexed theologians for a century and a half. We are still fighting the battles into which Kant led us, and it is not certain that we have even successfully managed to change the ground which he chose for the combat. The status of Theology, like that of Metaphysics, is still a matter of dispute, and if my analogy is worth while, the fate of the one can throw light upon that of the other.

Kant's negative work was decisive. He destroyed traditional metaphysics, but if he knew how metaphysics was to be reconstructed after his attack, then he kept the secret to himself. There is a legend that while he was writing the *Critique of Pure Reason* he promised his friends that it would be followed by his Metaphysics, but that when they asked him to make good his

4. E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy, New Haven*, 1941, p. 112.
5. P. S. Watson, *Let God be God* (London, 1947), p. 78.
6. E. A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (New York, 1952), p. 8.

promise he replied that the *Critique* itself was all the metaphysics they would get—that he had written his metaphysics under the new name of Transcendental Analytic. Metaphysics henceforth was to be understood as the analysis of the presuppositions underlying ordinary scientific activity. It was in this sense that the Positivists understood Kant.

What is the theological equivalent of this positivism? May I suggest that it is Fundamentalism? The only way to find a theological counterpart of Kant's Transcendental Analytic is to insist that the Holy Scriptures have the status of science—that they provide knowledge of the same epistemological order as our knowledge of the physical world. If this can be granted, then the problem of Biblical and Systematic Theology is easily solved: Theology consists of the analysis of the religious presuppositions of the Biblical documents. So far as it is able to order them, it is both Biblical and Systematic at the same time. This, it seems to me is the fundamentalist attitude to theology, and to call *it* a positivism of revelation is to throw some light on the combination of dogmatic certainty, agnosticism about problems which scripture does not solve, and refusal to speculate, which characterizes fundamentalist thought.

The analogy, however, offers one more spark of illumination. The greatest enemy which scientific positivism has had to face is historicism, and the same may be said of theological positivism. When Kant made his transcendental analysis of the presuppositions of science, he believed that the task could be completed once for all. But Collingwood and others have argued that what he analyzed were the absolute presuppositions, not of science as such, but of Newtonian science, and that since science is a living and growing thing, other constellations of presuppositions can likewise be laid bare by historical analysis.[7] This historicism poses a serious, if not fatal, problem for theological positivism. If different strata of religious ideas can be convincingly shown to exist in the Biblical documents, then the whole idea of a theology which is the permanent expression of Christian truth, at once the faith of the Bible and the historic faith of the church, falls to the ground.

But Collingwood's historicist revision of Kant raises a problem for those who are not fundamentalists. If it is true, as he argued, that Absolute Presuppositions cannot be propounded but can only be presupposed, and that the metaphysician's (or the theologian's) business is not to propound them, but to propound the proposition that this or that one of them is or has been presupposed,[8] then there is no possibility of making Biblical Theology nourish the faith of the church. If Collingwood is right, theologizing as a constructive activity is impossible. Theology can only be an historical study, analyzing the beliefs of the Biblical writers or such men as Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin and Schleiermacher, and Systematic Theology, in so far as it is scientific, cannot be anything more than the analysis of the beliefs of the church in the recent past. It may be analytic but it cannot be con-

7. R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics* (Oxford, 1940).
8. Op. cit., p. 33.

structive. It cannot help the church to formulate her policies or her proclamation. The present is as unknowable as the future, and all we can do is to act it out. The one theology that we cannot know is our own—only to God and our successors can it be evident.

If there is any truth in this argument, it may help to explain one curious feature of the demythologizing controversy. Why are Bultmann and his colleagues so anxious to move at one bound from exegesis to existence, or at least from Biblical Theology to preaching, without pausing to nod to the Systematic Theologians on the way? Because, on historicist principles, Systematic Theology has no help to offer. It can only invite you to break your journey from the 1st century to the 20th by stopping off in the 13th or 16th or 19th, thus involving you in two processes of demythologizing instead of one. At this end of the journey there can be no reception committee of "systematikers," only the hard, pioneering tasks of Christian existence today. On this view, it is only when others have fought the church's battles, proclaimed her faith and done her work, and only when the dust of conflict has died down, that the Systematic Theologian can begin his essentially analytic and historical task of stating in a detached, second-hand way, what it is that has been going on.

If Kant was held to have proved that the object of Metaphysics could not be Being-as-such, and the object of Theology could not be God-as-such, since neither God nor Being present themselves as objects of our experience, he bequeathed to his successors the problem of discovering what the true object of Theology might be. I have sugested that one answer which was given was that the object of Theology is not God, but the Biblical writings together with the later documents of the Christian faith. One implication of this answer is that scientific theology can never be more than an historical study. The second answer to which I wish to point has almost the opposite characteristic, for it defines Systematic Theology in such a way that it can refer only to the present and never in any serious way to the past.

Schleiermacher defines Dogmatic Theology as "the science which systematizes the doctrine prevalent in a Christian church at a given time,"[9] and the reason for his definition is indicated by the popular title of his system: *Glaubenslehre*, the doctrine of faith. Schleiermacher had seen that, after Kant, Systematic Theology could not avoid giving a direct answer to the question "What is the object of theology?" and he had answered "Not God, but human faith." "We shall exhaust," he said, "the whole compass of Christian doctrine if we consider the facts of the religious self consciousness" (§29). "All propositions which the system of Christian doctrine has to establish can be regarded . . . as descriptions of human states" (§30). "We much declare the description of human states of mind to be the fundamental dogmatic form" (*ibid.*). Propositions about the constitution of the world or about divine modes of action are only permissible in theology in so far as they can be developed out of propositions describing human states

9. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (E.T. Edinburgh, 1928), §19.

of mind. "Christian doctrines are accounts of the Christian religious affections set forth in speech" (§15).

On this basis, Schleiermacher was well able to reconstruct Systematic Theology, and indeed to breathe into it an energy which it had not known for generations. But what of its relation to the Bible, and was Biblical Theology in any sense possible on Schleiermacher's principles? In his description of the *Kirchenfürst*, the Prince of the Church, his ideal church leader, Schleiermacher gave great place to Biblical studies. "Every specialist in exegesis must be able to construe the text of the canon critically, while every theologian, whether specializing in exegesis or no, must master the principles and methods of historic criticism."[10] The Church, he said, must develop an expert knowledge of ancient languages among its own theologians. Exegesis he considered to be a permanent discipline, and he was himself a notable exegete, but between exegesis and theology a great gulf seems to be fixed. Despite his rich knowledge of the past, Schleiermacher can find little place for history in his theology. To him the past seems sometimes to be a dead past. When he speaks, for instance of the place that scripture and the historic confessions of the Church have to play in the formation of the dogmatic system he makes it plain that they cannot provide any of the content of theological propositions (§27). They are simply a test, a norm, though a sufficient norm (§131), which operates in a peculiarly external way. "Every system of doctrine . . . must strive to attach itself (*anzuschliessen*) to this history." The witness of scripture seems in no way to be unique, for "Scripture . . . is only one special instance of the witness to Christ (§127).

Schleiermacher may be said to have saved Systematic Theology, but only by losing Biblical Theology. He escaped the crisis about the object of theology which Kant had precipitated by making the religious consciousness its object. But in so doing he fell into subjectivism. I do not think that Schleiermacher can rightly be accused of being an individualist: he had a prominent place for the church in his thinking, but his theology is still subjective, for the church speaks to itself about itself. The church is never addressed, as Barth would say, from beyond itself by any word of God. It is imprisoned in immanence.

The third answer to Kant's problem about the object of metaphysics or of theology to which I wish to point is Hegel's. No one with any commitments to Biblical Theology is likely to think well of Professor Hegel. He is likely instead to be a chosen enemy. Hegel has also the misfortune of being the skeleton in the cupboard of the Systematic Theologians who often find it necessary to explain that if by any chance they should be discovered to be going about their work in a systematic way at least it is not Hegel's system which inspires them. But if Hegel was wrong, he was impressively wrong, and has indeed become a world-historical figure upon whom we must all take bearings. He solved Kant's problem about Metaphysics and Theology with breathtaking ease. By agreeing that the human mind makes its con-

10. Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies* (Chicago, 1926), p. 158 f.

tribution in the process of knowing, and by going on to assert that reality as a whole is mind, and that the human mind is the operation of the divine spirit in man, he opened the door to speculative theology on the grandest scale. "Human reason is the divine in man, and Spirit, so far as it is the Spirit of God is not a spirit beyond the stars, beyond the world. On the contrary, God is present, omnipresent, and exists as Spirit in all spirits. God is a living God, who is active and working."[11]

What concerns us is Hegel's attitude to Biblical and Systematic Theology. Everyone knows that Hegel's programme for saving theology was to elevate it to the dignity of a philosophic study, and he has the harshest words to speak to those who reduce theology to a historical study, whether they be Biblical Theologians or Historians of Doctrine.

> If the knowledge of religion is conceived as something to be reached historically only, then we should have to regard the theologians who have brought it to this point as clerks in a mercantile house, who have only kept an account of the wealth of strangers, who only act for others without receiving any property for themselves. They do indeed receive salary, but their reward is only to serve, and to register that which is the property of others. Theology of this kind no longer has a place at all in the domain of thought. . . . History occupies itself with truths which were truths—for others. . . . With the true content, with the knowledge of God, such theologians have no concern.[12]

So much for Biblical Theology! Here Hegel, the supposed apostle of "objectifying thought," attacks it, and urges the need for uniting subject and object. Kierkegaard himself might have said this, and perhaps he did, for there is a passage in his Journals about the Professor who receives the reward of the labour of others which could well be an adaptation of Hegel's remarks.[13]

Hegel would have thought little of our modern fashion of word studies and would probably have regarded them as a dishonest way of seeking to conceal Systematic Theology behind exegesis and so exempting it from criticism. "Mere word-interpretation can only amount to this, that for one word another co-extensive in meaning is substituted; but in the course of explanation further categories of thought are combined with it. For a development is advance to farther thoughts. In appearance the sense is adhered to, but in reality further thoughts are developed. Commentaries on the Bible do not so much make us acquainted with the content of the scriptures as rather with the manner in which things were conceived in the age in which they were written."[14]

This passage shows that if Hegel and Schleiermacher were united in their desire to make theology contemporary and even existential, they were opposed in their method. Schleiermacher solved the problem by expelling Biblical from Systematic Theology, Hegel by absorbing Biblical into Systematic Theology. Hegel was insistent that Biblical Theology should not be

11. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (E.T., London, 1895), vol. 1, p. 33.
12. Op. cit., vol. 1, p. 41.
13. R. Brettall (ed.), *A Kierkegaard Anthology* (London, 1947), p. 432.
14. Hegel, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 28.

allowed any kind of independent freedom. Even exegesis is not allowed to open its mouth without acknowledging itself as philosophical theology. "As soon as theology ceases to be a rehearsal of what is in the Bible, and goes beyond the words of the Bible, and concerns itself with the character of the feelings within the heart, it employs forms of thought and passes into thought."[15]

Hegel certainly gave a straight answer to Kant's question about the object of metaphysics and the object of theology. In both cases the answer was Absolute Spirit, which is at one and the same time the Spirit of God and the spirit in man—existing eternally in itself, eternally proceeding from itself, and eternally the same. He could claim to have overcome the problems of objectivism and subjectivism but only at the risk of identifying God and man. He could claim to have bridged the gulf between past and present but only at the cost of absorbing the past into a perfect present. Absolute Idealism (it has been said) demanded an absolute philosopher who could unite in his own person the authority of the Bible with that of the Church. It may seem credible to Roman Catholics that the Pope is infallible; it seemed less credible to Protestants that Hegel was infallible.

Enough has perhaps been said to illustrate the contention that the problem of Biblical Theology and its separation from Systematic Theology did not arise simply as a result of Biblical Criticism, but was made inevitable by Kant's attack on traditional metaphysics as it had been known in the Protestant world in the 17th and 18th centuries, that Kant's attack was one which Protestants could not ignore, and that the replies to Kant's challenge which I have described were all in some way inadequate. In conclusion I wish to indicate that Karl Barth's theology can also be construed as an answer to Kant's challenge, worthy of comparison with those of Schleiermacher and Hegel but escaping their errors. Far from being philosophically unsophisticated or naïvely supernatural, Barth seems to have taken the greatest pains to understand and to struggle with the philosophical problems which have been raised in the path of Systematic Theology.

For Barth, there is no return behind Biblical Criticism or behind Kant to the old "Divinity." It was rationalistic, even if it was rationalistic in a supernaturalistic way.[16] The doctrine of verbal inspiration, he says, may have been worked out as a bulwark against rationalism, but it was itself a product of rationalism, an attempt to provide a proof of revelation from reason, to make it an object of secular experience, and to replace faith and indirect knowledge with direct knowledge, presumably of a quasi-scientific kind. We cannot make the Word of God the direct object of our rational study any more than God Himself. The Word of God would remain like the *Ding-an-sich* behind the words of the scriptures but for God's act. God gives Himself to us in the Holy Scriptures, but He does so by an act of his grace and con-

15. Op. cit., vol. 2, p. 343.
16. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (E.T., Edinburgh, 1934, etc.), vol. 4, part 1, p. 368.

descension and is not our possession. The Bible is not a semi-magical device through which God is induced to speak. Barth here joins Kant in his attack on rationalist orthodoxy, but his attack is based not on scientific but on theological grounds.

What he says about the Bible is strictly paralleled by what he says about the words and concepts which we use in Systematic Theology when we "attempt in faith to respond to God's revelation." Systematic Theology is not a semi-magical device to compel God to speak through the Bible, or in any other way.

> To the question how we come to know God by means of our thinking and language, we must give the answer that of ourselves we do not come to know Him, that, on the contrary, this happens only as the grace of the revelation of God comes to us and therefore to the means of our thinking and language, adopting us and them, pardoning, saving, protecting and making good. We are permitted to make use, and a successful use at that, of the means given to us. We do not create this success. Nor do our means create it. But the grace of God's revelation creates it. To know this is the awe in which our knowledge of God comes true. . . . Our supposed idea of God . . . will always be the idea of the world and in the last resort of man. It will always be our own reflection, the hypostatization of our thought and speech. . . . We cannot ever mean God of ourselves. But He not only means us but knows about us. . . . He causes the miracle to happen by which we come to participate in the veracity of His revelation, and by which our words become true descriptions of Himself.[17]

J. V. L. Casserly suggests that Kant's first Critique can be considered as a critique of language. As such a critique, Barth has both understood it and answered it.

"God is known only by God." This is Barth's reply both to Kant and to those who interpret Kant in a positivist way. The Word of God never becomes the object of our scientific study of the scriptures but comes to us only in God's act of revelation. Nor is God Himself the object of our theological concepts so far as they are our concepts. "He has to make Himself object to us in the grace of His revelation." But he does, and this is why Barth is able to say with traditional orthodoxy, and against Schleiermacher that the object of theology really is God, but God in his revelation. God may be for Barth a hidden God, as fully hidden from human sight as the *Ding-an-sich*, but when he reveals himself "there is no hidden God, no Deus Absconditus, at the back of His revelation." How do we know that this is indeed God? Because when we meet Him, we have no power over Him "except the power to be His child, trusting and obedient to Him."[18]

Barth's answer to Kant is that God is not the object of our scientific knowledge, but that he does truly give himself to us in revelation. In the event of revelation we know the noumenon. In Natural Theology, as in subjective Idealism, the mind knows only itself. His answer to Schleiermacher is that because of God's revelation Theology can be Theology and not

17. Op. cit., vol. 2, part 1, pp. 179, 223, 228, 229.
18. Op. cit., vol. 2, part 1, pp. 178, 231, 210.

Anthropology. What is his answer to Hegel? First, that there is no pure conceptual language for theology, no way of leaving behind the inadequate picture language of the Bible and raising it to philosophical exactitude. Even the most rigourously conceptual language is human and awaits the spirit of adoption to cry out Abba, Father. "Dogmatics cannot speak down from heaven in the language of God, but only on earth." Secondly, theology itself does not formally embody Christian truth or give it any final expression. "The Word of God is above dogma as the heavens are above the earth," says Barth, referring to the Roman Catholic conception of dogma, but his words would apply as well to the Hegelian conception of theology. Theology cannot hope to set up a series of permanent doctrinal propositions. If the Bible is a witness to the revelation, dogmatics is a witness to this witness. "We relate ourselves to the event of faith, by relating ourselves to this sign. The thing we indicate is thus itself an index or a pointer."[19]

How, finally, does Barth handle the problem of the relation of Biblical to Systematic Theology? By declaring in the strongest way the necessity and the freedom of Dogmatics. It is not enough "to rediscover the world of the Biblical view and concept or to adopt the Biblical language in order to make the viewing and conceiving and language of truth our own."[20] Systematic Theology "must not be expected and ought not to try to achieve what is really the business of Biblical Theology,"[21] but he does not in saying this suggest that it has some superior task to perform. On the contrary, it is precisely because the church is human and theology is human that it must avoid the temptation to think that it can ever achieve a final and satisfactory form in which the truth of the Biblical revelation will be fully expressed. Dogmatics must be Biblical in the sense that it listens again and again to the Word of God, but it must also be confessional in that it must listen to the Word not only as it is attested in scripture but as it is conditioned for us by the teaching which has moulded and established the listening church of today.

In Barth's view, then, Systematic Theology cannot be content to be an historical science in the sense in which Collingwood intended that Metaphysics should be. It cannot be simply the exposition of Biblical material or material from the history of doctrine as mere information to be carried home. It may be this too, as all teachers demonstrate in their lectures, and as Barth demonstrates in the learned passages of exegesis and historical theology which occur in small type in his *Dogmatics*. But beyond the exposition of this material it is "the movement of this material—this material set in motion." And how do we know that this can be done? Not by proving it, but "factually"—by doing it.[22] Of Barth himself we must say that he has done it, with such skill and at such unwearying length as to excite our amazement, our admiration and our critical attention.

19. Op. cit., vol. 1, part 1, pp. 306, 309, 301. Cf. vol. 1, part 2, pp. 764–769.
20. Op. cit., vol. 2, part 1, p. 195.
21. Op. cit., vol. 1, part 2, p. 821.
22. Op. cit., vol. 1, part 1, pp. 304, 324.

The Christian Interpretation of the Psalms

S. B. FROST

OF all the books of the Old Testament the Psalter has undoubtedly meant most to the Christian. For nineteen centuries it has been his hymn-book and the offices of the Church were built around it. Among the reformed Churches, the Anglican works steadily through the whole Psalter each month at Morning and Evening Prayer, and those of the Presbyterian tradition still give pride of place to the Metrical Psalms. The hymn-books of all the Churches owe far more to the Psalter than most of those who use them recognize. Whether we sing *Praise my soul the King of Heaven*, or *All people that on earth do dwell* or *O God our Help in ages past*, we are still being guided in our worship by the inspiration of the Hebrew psalmists.

There is, however, a profound theological difference in some versions of the psalms as compared with others. If we take the best known of all the psalms as our illustration, we can chant the Prayer Book prose version: *The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing*, or we can sing the metrical version: *The Lord's my shepherd; I'll not want*, and both are straight-forward translations. A third version is that by George Herbert: *The God of love my shepherd is*. This deftly expounds the original thoughts and clothes them in words of fresh beauty, chosen indeed from the common stock, but with a poet's sensitivity. It is aesthetically more satisfying, but like the prose translation and the metrical paraphrases it is content to re-express the original thoughts unchanged.

But when we come to another very familiar version, that of Henry Williams Baker, we are aware of a subtle but unmistakable difference:

> In death's dark vale I fear no ill
> With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
> Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
> Thy cross before to guide me

The cup which runs over has become the chalice of the Eucharist, the table which is spread is the table of the Lord's supper, and the whole psalm has been deftly but effectively christianized. This tendency is taken still further in the little known but very lovely version of Charles Wesley of which I quote the third verse:

> He in sickness makes me whole,
> Guides into the paths of peace;
> He revives my fainting soul,
> Stablishes in righteousness:
> Who for me vouchsafed to die,
> Loves me still—I know not why!

It is quite clear that Baker and Wesley have, like George Herbert and the Westminster Divines, taken the psalm for their model, but unlike them they

have each produced a poem which is as distinctively Christian as the psalm is distinctively Hebrew. What is perhaps not so widely recognized is that Baker and Wesley were but expressing in verse the traditional Christian interpretation of the psalms. In his *Letter to Marcellinus*, Athanasius remarks:

> If, again, you want to sing Psalms that speak especially about the Saviour, you will find something in almost all of them; but 45 and 110[1] relate particularly to His Divine Begetting from the Father and His coming in the flesh, while 22 and 69 foretell the holy cross and the grievous plots He bore and how great things He suffered for our sakes. The 3rd and 109th also display the snares and malice of the Jews and how Iscariot betrayed Him; 21, 50 and 72 all set Him forth as Judge and foretell His Second Coming in the flesh to us; they also show the Gentiles' call. The 16th shows His resurrection from the dead, in flesh, the 24th and 47th His ascension into heaven. And in the four psalms, 93, 96, 98 and 99, all the benefits deriving from the Saviour's passion are set forth together.

In Psalm 45, Athanasius finds a clear reference to the Annunciation:

> Neither is the Psalmist silent about the fact that He should be born of a virgin—no, he underlines it straight away in Psalm 45 . . . "Hearken, O daughter," he says, "and see and incline thine ear, and forget thine own people and thy father's house. For the King has desired thy beauty and He is thy Lord." Is not this like what Gabriel said, "Hail, thou that art full of grace, the Lord is with Thee"? For the Psalmist, having called Him the Anointed One, that is, Messiah or Christ, forthwith declares His Human birth by saying, "Hearken, O daughter, and see"; the only difference being that Gabriel addresses Mary by an epithet, because he is of another race from her, while David fitly calls her his own daughter, because it was from him that she should spring.[2]

Athanasius could, of course, claim that in this interpretation of scripture he was but following in the footsteps of the New Testament writers themselves. Of the soldiers gambling for Jesus' tunic, St. John says: "This was to fulfil the Scripture: 'They parted my garments among them, and for my clothing did they cast lots'," which is a reference to Psalm 22. St. Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians misquotes Psalm 68 and understands it as referring to the Ascension: "When he ascended on high, he led a host of captives and gave gifts unto men." The Epistle to the Hebrews refers to Psalm 2: "Thou art my son, Today I have begotten thee," and again to Psalm 110: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," and reads both as direct references to Jesus. Thus it is important to recognize that for the New Testament Church these psalms were not merely messianic, they were also Christological: that is, they not only pointed forward to the Messiah but definitely pointed to Jesus of Nazareth as that Messiah.

This remained true for the medieval exegetes and for those of the Reformation period. Miss Smalley has drawn our attention to Herbert of Bosham, who wrote his commentary at the end of the 12th or beginning of

1. The Hebrew enumeration of the Psalms is followed throughout this paper.
2. *St. Athanasius on the Psalms*, tr. by A Religious of C.S.M.V. (London, 1949), pp. 34, 14.

the 13th century.[3] He was almost certainly a pupil of Master Andrew of St. Victor, who was himself very probably influenced by the rationalizing tendencies of Rashi. Herbert's view of Scripture is conditioned by the four senses but he disclaims any pretensions of dealing with the higher senses and of set purpose he limits himself to the literal. He writes: "I am not striving after an understanding of the difficult spiritual senses, but with the animals that walk the earth, I cleave to earth, attending only to the lowest sense of the letter of the Psalter." He was thus well aware of the possibility of a difference between the Christological and the literal interpretation of a psalm and it was the latter he was seeking. Nevertheless, so great is the domination of the traditional exegesis that he is often unable to free himself from it, or at least feels it impolitic to do so. His method was to set out the traditional Christological interpretation of a psalm, calling it the *expositio ecclesiastica*, and then to add an account of the literal (often Jewish) exposition, and he apparently wishes to be free to decide between them, though he does not always allow his preference to appear too clearly. I quote from Miss Smalley:

> He may opt for the Christian and then proceed to set forth the Jewish on the pretext of showing how wrong it is. He may even, as on Psalm liv, contradict himself, saying first that according to the ecclesiastical exposition the psalm is a prophecy of the Passion and Resurrection; secondly that according to the literal sense it is a prayer of David against Achitophel and Doeg; thirdly, that "whatever the *litterator* may pretend, the psalm manifestly prophesies our King and Messias and his betrayal by Judas."

In this case (Miss Smalley observes) "he is using 'the literal sense' ambiguously, contrasting it with what he takes to be the true sense. He cannot quite free himself from an inheritance of confused terminology."

I have been very glad to avail myself of Miss Smalley's research on Herbert because he illustrates our subject so admirably. When we turn to Luther, we get the impression that he is equally confused in his thinking on this matter, but does not wish to free himself from his inheritance. If we turn to Psalm 45, the one that meant so much to Athanasius, we find him dealing with v. 6, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" as follows:

> This passage not only teaches us that Christ is by nature true God, but also reminds us of His office, that of declaring the right and preserving order in His kingdom. . . . Since it is written that He is the fairest, and it is obvious that He is a man, it must follow that He is also mortal. Nevertheless, He is also eternal, since "Thy throne is eternal, O God." Now compare these with one another. The text states He is among the sons of men where death reigns, so he must necessarily die. Yet it says He will be eternal. Therefore the resurrection of the dead is deduced from this passage.[4]

Luther is too practical a man to refuse to recognize that the psalms must have had a contemporary meaning and he finds the words of v. 10 addressed

3. B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1952), pp. 186–195.
4. *Luther's Works* (St. Louis, 1957), Vol. 12, p. 230f.

both to old Israel and to the Church: "The Holy Spirit addresses the Church and synagogue in common." This passing recognition that the psalm had a contemporary meaning is significant in that it reminds us that the historical interpretation had never been entirely lost to sight.[5] The titles given in the Hebrew Psalter may not be of much exegetical value, but at least they secured that the historical interpretation was not wholly obscured by the Christological. This reveals itself more clearly in Calvin's comments on the same psalm in which he emphasizes that it is an epithalamium and regards it as composed for the marriage of Solomon to an Egyptian princess. When, however, he meets details which he cannot easily interpret of Solomon, he gets out of the difficulty by falling back on the further application to Jesus as Messiah. Of v. 6 ("Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever") he remarks that the unseemliness of the application to Solomon shows that "the divine majesty of Christ, beyond all question, is expressly denoted here."[6] The tendency to allow the historical interpretation more recognition also reveals itself in the general soberness of the prefaces to the psalms supplied by the translators of the King James' Version. At Psalm 2 we read indeed: "The Kingdom of Christ. Kings are exhorted to accept it"; and at Psalm 45: "The majesty and grace of Christ's Kingdom. The duty of the Church and the benefits thereof"; and at Psalm 110: "The Kingdom, the priesthood, the conquest and the passion of Christ"; but such psalms as 22 or 55 which might well have received a Christological interpretation are explained wholly in terms of the historical reference to David. Even so, Lowth in the eighteenth century still recognizes the Christological interpretation as existing validly alongside the historical, as the following quotation illustrates:

> The subject of the second psalm is the establishment of David upon the throne. . . . The character which David sustains in this psalm is twofold, literal and allegorical. . . . If in the first reading of the Psalm we consider the character of David in the literal sense, the composition appears sufficiently perspicuous, and abundantly illustrated by facts from sacred history. . . . If we turn our minds to contemplate the internal sense, and apply the same passages to the allegorical David, a nobler series of events is presented to us and a meaning not only more sublime, but even more perspicuous rises to view. . . . If after having considered attentively the subjects apart, we examine them at length in a united view, the beauty and sublimity of this most elegant poem will be improved. We may then perceive the vast disparity of the two images, and yet the continual harmony and agreement that subsists between them . . ., so that either may pass for the original whence the other was copied.[7]

A commentary which maintained its popularity long into the 19th century was that of Bishop Horne, entitled *A commentary on the Book of Psalms, in which their literal or historical sense as they relate to King David and the people of Israel is illustrated; and their application to Messiah, to the*

5. Particularly by the Antiochene Fathers. On Theodore of Mopsuestia, cf. J. D. Wood, *The Interpretation of the Bible* (London, 1958), p. 60.
6. *Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (Edinburgh, 1846), Vol. II, p. 181.
7. *Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, ed. Stowe (Andover, 1829), p. 91.

Church and to Individuals as members thereof is pointed out, with a view to render the use of the Psalter pleasing and profitable to all orders and degrees of Christians.[8]

The effect, however, of what we may justly term the Second or Liberal Reformation, from which period we are perhaps just beginning to emerge, has been strongly to discountenance any interpretation other than the literal. A review of commentaries written under the influence of that reformation shows not merely that the principle that the psalms had a meaning for the people of their own day is everywhere accepted as primary, but also that it is generally thought by commentators that once this meaning has been established the commentator's task is wholly fulfilled. Indeed I think we may say that no part of the Scriptures has changed its character in the hands of modern scholars so greatly as has the Psalter. For good or ill, we all of us sit at the feet of Hermann Gunkel and Sigmund Mowinckel. Gunkel taught us to see the psalms, not as uniformly one type of literary product, all monotonously and indistinguishably "psalms," but as exhibiting widely-differing characteristics, according as they originated from markedly different settings. Thus we have the various *Gattungen*: the Royal Psalms, the Enthronement Psalms, the Hymns, the Lament, the Thanksgiving, and so on. Mowinckel has emphasized that the majority if not all of these *Gattungen* have their *Sitz im Leben* in the cultus of the Jerusalem Temple, and modern commentators have necessarily worked from these accepted positions. It will be interesting to see therefore what a representative selection of commentaries make of the psalm on which we already have heard Athanasius, Luther and Calvin comment: Psalm 45, *Eructavit cor meum* ("My heart is inditing a good matter").

Let us begin with the Anglican W. O. E. Oesterley.[9] He writes: "That this psalm, if it may be so called, found a place in the Psalter, is to be explained on grounds similar to those which ultimately permitted the admission of the Song of Songs into the Canon. . . . The King who plays the leading part was conceived of as representing the Messiah, and the queen . . . as the Jewish people of the Messianic era." He then expounds the psalm in its original setting as an epithalamium, explaining the crucial v. 6 ("Thy throne, O God, . . .") as being due to divinizing tendencies in Israel's cultural milieu. He then ends by adding a single sentence: "The subject-matter of this psalm does not call for a section on religious teaching." One is left wondering what thoughts occupied Dr. Oesterley's mind at Morning Prayer on the ninth day of each month. Rudolf Kittel, who published his Commentary in 1929, was a Lutheran.[9a] He begins:

The poem was applied in the Early Church to the Messiah. He is reckoned as the King of the Congregation, and so the Queen is the Congregation itself. . . .

8. First published in 1776 and reprinted over twenty times. John Wesley remarked: "I suppose it is the best that ever was wrote" (*Journal*, March 27, 1783), though he is critical of some details.

9. *The Psalms* (London, 1939).

9a. *Die Psalmen* (K.A.T.) 6th edit., Leipzig, 1929.

But this explanation has long since given way to the historical. . . . Today all are agreed that the marriage of a real King was the occasion of our poem. But we are indebted certainly to the allegorical exposition that the song has come down to us. Only with its protection could the compiler dare to take the poem into the Canon.

He then contents himself with explaining the psalm in its historical setting, and the Lutheran congregation is left no wiser than the Anglican. Artur Weiser is, I believe, a member of the Reformed Church, and I would like to include a Calvinist among my authorities. The Foreword to his Third Edition[10] begins thus: "Compared with the first two editions, the Third Edition of this Commentary differs not only in that now all the Psalms are included, but also by reason of the attempt to define the place of psalm-composition and psalm-tradition, to make the results fruitful for the historical and theological exposition of the individual psalms." It is therefore with some hope that we turn to our Psalm 45. He begins rather depressingly: "The psalm is the solitary example of the secular song in the Psalter." He then interprets the psalm in its historical setting. He ends by remarking that the promise of the poet to immortalize the King's name would certainly not have been fulfilled had not "the Psalm already in olden times received a messianic reinterpretation, and thus understood found a place in the Psalter. . . . Certainly, this allegorical interpretation would not have been possible but for the high sense of moral and religious responsibility, which in the psalm itself continually shines through the dress of court-style, and lifts the sphere of the earthly and secular into the realm of religion." The Presbyterians are thus given a reminder of the moral issues of human affairs to aid their singing of the Metrical Psalms, but not, I think, the theological guidance which we were led by the Foreword to expect.

The commentary to which an increasing number of North American and British preachers will turn is the Interpreter's Bible[11]. The exegesis of our psalm by W. Stewart McCullough is fully in accord with what the other commentators have said, but it is to the exposition that we must look for guidance on how the psalm is to be interpreted in a distinctively Christian sense. Edwin McNeill Poteat (who is incidentally a Baptist) raises the crucial question: Is the Psalm messianic? His answer is as follows:

It is to be expected, then, that where messianism is an important element in the body of Christian doctrine, this picture of the great king would be taken over in some of its details. The hope that springs eternal in the human breast needs pictures that do not fade. That such pictures usurp the place of fact, that men too often prefer an old fancy to a new truth, is something we must live with, so long as we are mortal. Is not this the true function of poetry after all? And if messianism is no more than a great recurrent, poetic theme, even on these grounds it could be dismissed as empty of meaning or value.

Even if we presume (as I think we must) that we should read "it could *not* be dismissed as empty of meaning and value," we have here a very

10. *Die Psalmen* (Göttingen, 1950).
11. *The Psalms*, in *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. IV (1955).

curious estimate of messianism: to wit, that it is merely an old fancy which should not be preferred, as it often regrettably is, to some new truth, the content of which is however not indicated. We presume, then, that the answer to the question he asked is: "The psalm is not messianic, but it has been taken as such. We advise you not to do so." This, I suggest, leaves the Baptists, if they use the psalm in worship, firmly in the Old Testament, and I cannot think that either H. H. Rowley or Billy Graham can be very happy at the prospect. Christian worship must be Christian.

My Roman commentator is Monsignor Kissane.[12] He too recognizes that this psalm was originally composed to commemorate the marriage of a King, but when he raises the question of its messianic character, he is terse and to the point: "There can be no doubt that the psalm is messianic. It is cited as such by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and both Jewish and Christian tradition gave it this interpretation. The Targum understood it, or at least part of it, as referring to the Messiah in the *literal* sense, and this is also the view of St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine. But it is now generally agreed that in its *literal* sense the psalm refers to a historical king and that it is Messianic in its *typical* sense." This, as we would expect from the Church of Rome, is clear and direct guidance and her monks as they sing the psalm in the divine office are at least told what to make of it.

From this survey we learn that, so long as commentators on the Psalter refuse to recognize any other meaning in scripture than the historical or literal, much of the Psalter and particularly the Royal Psalms must be devoid of any Christian theological significance. Yet this is a consequence in which the Christian community cannot lightly acquiesce. Bishop Alexander's Bampton lectures make curious reading in these days, but one passage has retained at least some of its cogency. On the tendency beginning to appear in his day to abandon a belief in the literal truth of Genesis, he remarks,

> a disbelief in the Bible account of the creation of man, however explained, may coexist—it is to be feared illogically—with a reverence for the supreme authority of Christ. It can scarcely be so with the book we propose to examine. The Psalmists cannot be put away from us with an impatient shrug, to a more convenient season. At marriages and funerals, by sick-beds and in stately ceremonials, in churches and in homes, they make their voices heard at every turn. They are as near to us as the Evangelists themselves. Christianity is responsible for the Psalter with its very life.[13]

We must agree, I think, that because of their place in worship and tradition we can not avoid giving some indication to the laymen of the Church why they should sing the Psalms and what kind of interpretation of them they should adopt. But I find myself forced to the view that we cannot give that explanation and that guidance unless we are prepared to revert in some manner to the doctrine of multiple senses of scripture.

12. *The Book of Psalms* (Dublin, 1953).
13. *The Witness of the Psalms to Christ* (first published in 1876; 2nd ed., New York, 1877), p. 5.

Here we are straightway plunged into one of the most vigorous and in my opinion most fruitful debates of our time. In the last part of this paper I merely wish to make two observations on this important subject.

First, we shall have to re-define our terminology. In arguing for a further, valid sense of scripture than the strictly historical, we are faced with a difficulty of nomenclature and of historical confusion in the use of that nomenclature. Most scholars (if not all) would recognize that the way forward is not to revert to allegory. By allegory they mean the practice of using figures or incidents in the Bible to symbolize teachings which are not instrinsically related to those figures or incidents, but which depend for that relationship on the exegete's individual caprice. But an increasing number of reputable theologians are prepared to re-examine the view that typology can yield a valid theological interpretation of scripture. By typology they mean a relationship which is inherent between the two matters compared *because there is in fact an objective and historical relationship between them.* Even if it is granted that this is a legitimate distinction of typology from allegory, the further difficulty arises that earlier writers, including the New Testament authors themselves, have by no means kept the two practices or the two terms distinct. Even now we find a scholar of the irreproachable exactitude of H. H. Rowley arguing for something very like the view which Daniélou,[14] Eichrodt,[15] Lampe,[16] and others would call typological, and yet strongly refusing the term. Thus, speaking of the New Testament event of Jesus, Rowley writes:

> In finding the same pattern of revelation here and in the Old Testament we are not resorting to typology and arguing that the old revelation was a foreshadowing of the new. That is far from our thoughts here. The old revelation had a reality and a validity in its own right. The new, too, had a validity in its own right. If both were revelations of the same God, as they claimed to be, then in the common pattern of the revelation in personal and impersonal factors, where neither could explain or control the other, we have the signature of God. . . . The community of pattern does not mean that all could have been predicted before-hand, but that when the new pattern appears its community with the old can be perceived. It is as the revelation unfolds itself that the pattern becomes evident.[17]

That is an excellent statement of what many scholars understand to be the typological principle in scripture, but it explicitly denies the term. This confusion of terminology in the past, which still continues in the present, means that we must re-explore and re-define those terms, so that the validity of typological exegesis may be retained and the vagaries of allegorism excluded. But it will be important to recognize that the new definition will

14. J. Daniélou, *Origen* (London, 1955).
15. W. Eichrodt, "Ist die typologische Exegese sachgemässe Exegese?" in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* (Leiden, 1957), IV.
16. G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woollcombe, *Essays on Typology* (London, 1957).
17. *The Unity of the Bible* (London, 1953), p. 98. A brief but thoughtful criticism of modern typological interpretation, and also of the *sensus plenior* advocated by J. Coppens, is to be found in J. D. Wood, op. cit., p. 159f.

be valid only for our own debate. Our understanding of typology will have a sensitivity to history built into it, simply because we are scholars of the post-Liberal-Reformation period. Because we have passed through that Second Reformation, history has a significance for us which it could not have for Paul or the writer of the Fourth Gospel or even for Calvin. *Our typology will be recognizably akin to theirs, but it will by no means be identical.* We must not be surprised for example to find even St. Paul offending against canons which we ourselves must never disrespect.[18] The Liberal Reformation, having once occurred, has conditioned all our thinking with a respect for history which we cannot expect earlier generations to share.

The second observation I wish to make is that the typological approach to the Bible must inevitably be something distinctively Christian. Eichrodt has pointed out indeed that it is not something foreign to the thought of the Old Testament, and that Deutero-Isaiah is thinking in something very like these ways when he proclaims the Restoration in terms of the Exodus. Again Frank Cross speaks of the typological thought of the Qumran Community,[19] and it will be an interesting investigation, when and if Christian theologians have come to an agreement on their own new understanding of typological thinking, to see whether the Qumran exegesis falls properly within or outside its scope. But it will certainly be a different brand of typology. Since the Christian takes the event of Jesus Christ and uses that event to detect and evaluate the patterns of history in the Old Testament, the resultant interpretation must inevitably be something distinctively Christian. K. J. Woollcombe remarks: "Historical typology as defined above came into existence with Christendom. Its character as a method of writing was of course determined by the character of prophecy, and its character as a method of exegesis by the character of the study of prophecy. It was also considerably influenced by allegory. But when St. Paul wrote that Adam was a figure (*tupos*) of Christ, he was saying something substantially new."[20] This means, however, that the whole of the Old Testament means something different to the Christian from what it does to the Jew. That is why the Christian has a distinctive name for this body of literature; for him these are not merely the Hebrew Scriptures, but they are the Old Testament as over against and complementary to the New Testament. The importance of this observation is that in it lies our safeguard against vagaries of interpretation. Allegory which is a-historical has no such safeguard. The literal sense is safeguarded by the factual historicity of its own event. A passage means *this*, and can mean nothing but this—at that level. *The typological sense on the other hand is safeguarded not by the Old Testament's own history but by the historical event of Jesus Christ and his Church.* Clearly the establishing of that further sense of scripture will always be an art rather than a science but the principle governing it is, I submit, clear.

18. E.g., in I Cor. 10:1–5.
19. F. M. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran* (New York, 1958), p. 85f.
20. *Essays on Typology*, p. 42.

Thus if we return in closing to Psalm 45, we may acknowledge with all students of the Hebrew Scriptures, Jewish and Christian, that its literal sense is that of an epithalamium for a Hebrew King. As such, however, there is no reason why a Christian congregation should sing it in its worship today. But in its typical sense it refers to Christ the Conquering King and His Bride the Church, and in singing the psalm it is these thoughts and these aspirations which the Christian congregation should have in mind. I therefore suggest that one of the finest expositions of the *Christian* sense of the psalm is that given by Charles Wesley, in one of his greatest compositions:

> My heart is full of Christ, and longs
> Its glorious matter to declare.

The Authority of the Canon

JOSEPH C. McLELLAND

MY appointed task is to address the topic of this paper from the point of view of the philosophy of religion. We all know that this science has fallen upon bad times over the past decades. But a few years ago it changed its name to Philosophical Theology, accepted Paul Tillich as chief spokesman, and now happily pursues linguistic analysis, asks existential questions, and perhaps—at night and in private—reads a little of Karl Barth.

In view of this situation, how is the philosopher of religion (or the philosophical theologian) to aproach the subject of the authority of the canon? I propose to begin with Kierkegaard's idea of revelation and apostolicity, then to relate this to the problem of canonicity and tradition, and finally to show the inadequacy of Barth's christological analogy and the need for a reformulated doctrine of inspiration. If it is somewhat ominous to begin with Kierkegaard and end with Barth, to attempt all this in one paper is a kind of lunacy. On both counts I crave your indulgence.

1. The Difference between a Genius and an Apostle

Adolph Peter Adler, Magister Artium, Lutheran priest in Denmark, and author of four books in the Hegelian vogue, experienced in 1842 a "vision of light" in which Jesus bade him burn his books, and dictated the substance of a new one. Adler was deposed after an enquiry in which he admitted that "revelation was perhaps too strong an expression" for his experience. Adler's contemporary, Soren Kierkegaard, rejoiced at first that perhaps now Christendom had what it required, someone to claim divine authority in such a way as to scandalize it into a Socratic confession of its ignorance of Christian truth. But Adler lacked sufficient naïveté to maintain the ironic situation. Therefore Kierkegaard writes:

> We will stop here and look carefully before us, for it seems clear enough that the upshot of Adler's whole story is that he is a genius. *Quel bruit pour une omelette*! All honour to genius. In case Adler is a genius, in God's name! I certainly shall not envy him for that. But he began by having had a revelation—though *summa summarum* by this we are to understand that he is a genius [*On Authority and Revelation*, p. 102].

Kierkegaard's thesis is that between an apostle and a genius there is a qualitative distinction, the decisive factor being the divine authority. The genius is born, the apostle is made. The genius develops from his potential possibility, while the apostle's existence is contingent upon the historical actuality of the divine revelation which constitutes him such. Kierkegaard

goes on to satirize that "clerical ignorance" which prostitutes Christianity by eulogizing, for instance, the genius of St. Paul—his style and artistic use of language. Why not rather "maintain that his work as an upholsterer must have been so perfect that no upholsterer either before or since has been able to equal it?"

The episode of Adler and Kierkegaard points up in a striking manner the basic problem of our philosophy of revelation: that the historicity of Christian truth involves a unique, contingent and unrepeatable factor which offended, most notably, the philosopher Lessing. He claimed that "accidental truths of history can never establish necessary truths of reason," and refused "to dream of suspending nothing less than all eternity by a spider's thread," meaning the words of the witnesses of Christianity's first period. Now we cannot avoid offending Lessing and his friends. Although Christianity learns much from her men of genius, she is not built upon their teaching, upon the fruits of genius. Her one foundation is an Apostle sent from God, namely Jesus Christ (Heb. 3:1); and with Him in this foundational apostolate are those whom He in turn has sent (Eph. 2:20).

Theological students are taught that an apostle is "one sent with a commission." But the decisive character of apostolicity is its relation to the Incarnation, indeed to the forty days between Christ's Resurrection and Ascension. Just as Christ was sent into the world at a certain time and place—so that Caesar Augustus and Pontius Pilate became involved in the event—even so are the apostles called and sent because of this space-time phenomenon, this historical figure. Revelation as incarnation of the Word means a distinction of times: the time of Christ, the time of the apostolate, the time of the Church that received its canon, and the continuing time of Church proclamation.

This radical nature of apostolicity is best illustrated by the thorny problem of St. Paul's conversion. We must begin from a text like Mark 3:14, "and he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach." After the Ascension, Peter set forth the criteria of apostolicity quite explicitly: "So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection" (Acts 1:21f). Justus and Matthias fulfilled the criteria, and the lot was cast between them. Since this was after the Ascension, after the event which sealed the resurrection with its veil of a hidden dimension, with its infinite recession into the being of the Godhead, therefore the criteria could apply only retroactively, to a limited (and diminishing) number of men.

On the Damascus Road, Saul the Pharisee claims to have received the commissioning of an apostle. His claim has nothing to do with religious genius, but with the fact that the nature of his vision united him with the apostolate, presented him, in an unique yet valid sense, with the criteria of the witnesses to the Resurrection. Thus he describes himself as one born too

late for normal apostolic vision, but nevertheless, like an abortion unnaturally alive, to be added to the list of witnesses: "Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me" (I Cor. 15:8). In effect, this is a pre-Ascension kind of vision: "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" (I Cor. 9:1).

It is this meaning of apostolicity that the religious philosopher misses in much of today's research. To take an illustrious example, C. H. Dodd finds the authority of the Bible in "the authority of experts in the knowledge of God, masters in the art of living; the authority of religious genius," and describes Jesus as one "in whom religious genius reached its highest point and passed into something greater still" (*The Authority of the Bible*, pp. 24, 27). Dodd's basis is the primary authority of truth itself, and he sees clearly that the real problem is the way God conveys His truth to men. Yet his concept of "genius" compromises the constitutive orientation of the apostolate, and surely of Christ himself. The canon was closed because the relation of the New Testament authors to the apostolic witness was thought to form a closed circle, like the relation of the apostles themselves to Christ. Paul could be referred backwards in this circle, but not forwards into the category of religious genius. The latter would have meant an extension *ad infinitum*, so that a Theresa in the sixteenth century or an Adler in the nineteenth might be considered equally authoritative.

2. The Canon and Tradition

The formal criteria of canonicity have proved complex in the history of the Church, and have combined with the working of some internal criterion as well. The Old Testament canon was not closed finally until early in the Christian era. The rabbinic tradition of the post-exilic community demanded that a prophetic book be written in Hebrew and before the time of Nehemiah. Yet *Ecclesiasticus* fulfils both tests and was not accepted. The New Testament case is similar. About twenty books were universally recognized by the second century Church as a basic canon. The two chief marks appear to have been apostolic origin and general usage—with Marcion as a negative test! The *Shepherd* of Hermas, although referred to by Irenaeus as "Scripture," was rejected at Rome because Hermas wrote "quite recently, in our own times." The famous listing of Eusebius in the fourth century indicates seven disputed books, if we include Hebrews and Revelation, which were accepted in certain parts of the Church. The five generally disputed were James, II Peter, II and III John, Jude.

The term *canon*, meaning staff, rule, pattern, originally signified the whole rule of faith, the apostolic doctrine. When the fourth century Church applied the term to its official list of writings, was it making a particular application of a general principle, or perhaps narrowing the meaning of the term? This is the question at the heart of our contemporary problem of Tradition. I submit in answer, however, that the Church from the second to the fourth centuries was a Church in reaction, being forced to define and

to declare its authoritative rule of faith and life, and that it was able at last to say that its canon was a written, finalized, prophetic-apostolic word.

In equating its canon with Scripture, with a group of writings, the Church was acknowledging a certain independence or autonomy, a "freedom towards her and power over her," of this canon. Thus the Church cannot be said properly to "create" her canon, but rather to recognize and declare the nature and bounds of the rule created and given by her Lord. The closing of the canon corresponded to the closed circle of historical revelation on which her existence depended.

Yet the closing of the canon was a "Church" event, and therefore not simply ultimate or divine. The formal and material criteria remain operative, so that each generation must accept the canon by its own decision of faith. This truth was illustrated in the sixteenth century, when the canon was modified in two ways. In the first place, the problematic Apocrypha were declared to be uncanonical in the proper and therefore authoritative sense, by the Reformed party at least. Secondly, the seven New Testament books which had been suspect in the Early Church (the *antilegomena*) were once again questioned—by Luther, Calvin, Brenz, not to mention Erasmus and even Cardinal Cajetan!

Luther's stress falls on the content of Scripture: it preaches or treats of Christ; that is its office, and so its test (*was Christum treibet*). He calls the Bible "in truth the spiritual body of Christ," and Christ the "mathematical point of holy scripture." He makes an interesting distinction between the Old Testament as Scripture proper because of its written form, and the New Testament as properly a preached Gospel. His radical emphasis on the criterion of the preaching of Christ led him to write, in the familiar passage from the *Preface* to James and Jude:

> All the genuine sacred books agree in this, that all of them preach Christ and deal with him. That is the true test by which to judge all books, when we see whether they deal with Christ or not, since all the Scriptures show us Christ, and St. Paul will know nothing but Christ. What does not teach Christ is not apostolic even though St. Peter or St. Paul taught it; again, what preaches Christ would be apostolic even though Judas, Annas, Pilate and Herod did it.

Thus he can state that "John's Gospel and St. Paul's Epistles, especially that to the Romans, and St. Peter's First Epistle, are the true kernel and marrow of all books." As early as his September Bible of 1522 he had separated the books of Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation in the table of contents, thus preparing for Lutheranism's distinction between a proto- and deutero-canon. The book of James, that "right strawy epistle," is on occasion called "a good book," but Luther also declared, "One of these days I'll use James to light the fire!"

With John Calvin we take a careful step forward, which will have mixed effects in later years. Calvin suggests one valid "proof" for the authority of the canon, the justly famous *testimonium internum spiritus sancti*—not originated, but best articulated by him.

Let it be considered, then, as an undeniable truth, that they who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit, feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture, and that it is self-authenticated, carrying with it its own evidence; it ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and arguments from reason; but it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit [*Inst.* 1.7.5].

But in the next chapter he proceeds to give "arguments from reason" as a kind of secondary "proof" to those experiencing the Spirit's prior witness. Calvin's methodology here presents a like problem to that of his doctrine of predestination. Unfortunately, historic Calvinism has managed to place the emphasis in both doctrines on the secondary rationalizing rather than Calvin's primary grappling with the mystery of the Spirit's office.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, however, is faithful to Calvin on this point. After indicating those qualities of Scripture "whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God," the Confession concludes, "Yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our heart" (1.5). Thus Scripture is instrumental in the first place, object of the Spirit's witness only in a secondary and derivative way.

Perhaps these notes from Luther and Calvin illustrate their conviction that the authority of the canon partakes of an absolute character. For them, this is not a question of a primary source of authority within a relative context of complementary strands of tradition—such as the shape of the liturgy as Dom Gregory Dix outlined it, or the rule of truth or faith as Tertullian and Irenaeus use the terms. And even if the Reformers, like Athanasius before them, argued for certain foundation doctrines as contained in Scripture only indirectly or implicitly (an argument *de re ipsa* but not *de vocabulo*), this was not felt to question the "sufficient authority" of Scripture in the Church. It was their consistent and insistent enunciation of this principle that led to the erection of a counter-Church beginning with the Tridentine decrees. For it was the Council of Trent which built a new structure on largely unformed ideas. It brought the old Vincentian Rule up to date: now there were to be two explicitly marked channels by which revelation is transmitted, Scripture and tradition, each to be heard *pari pietatis affectu.*

When one considers the unfortunate direction of post-Tridentine Romanism, and the new form of the question it poses, the debate about Tradition carried on between Anglicans and those they call "Protestants" seems decidedly *demitasse.* I refer to the concept of the development of doctrine, by which Tradition no longer merely draws out what is implicit in Scripture and oral apostolic doctrine (the old idea of "logical explication"), but now is an instrument for the progression and production of new doctrine. This has led Karl Adam to contrast the "dead word" of Scripture with the "living voice" of the Church.

The Tübingen school's Johann A. Möhler seems to be the key figure in this story. His relation to John Henry Newman has been treated most

recently by Owen Chadwick in his book *From Bossuet to Newman*. From this line of ancestry came M. J. Scheeben, most influential at the time when Pius IX declared that the Pope, speaking *ex cathedra*, possesses the infallibility which Christ wished the doctrinal definitions of faith and life to possess in his Church. The classical concept of tradition as the unwritten apostolic testimony and the process of its Church transmission was now left behind. There was to be a third source of revelation, the creative, vital authority of the Church of Rome, as gathered up in one head, even in its *papa*. For the same Vatican decree of 1870 states that the papal words, by themselves and not by the consent of the Church, are *irreformable*—he who contradicts them, *anathema sit*.

It seems to me that this movement above all others presses us for an answer to the problem of Scripture and Tradition, and in particular to the authority of the Canon, in terms of a new doctrine of inspiration.

3. Christology and the Doctrine of Inspiration

The unhappy history of the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture in the post-Reformation Church is familiar to all. Where Luther and Calvin talked of the preaching of Christ and the witness of the Spirit, Protestant Orthodoxy talked of dictation and inerrancy. The ground of authority was shifted so that the doctrine of Scripture became related directly to theories of inspiration rather than of revelation. Thus the Lutheran Calov could state, "The form of divine revelation is inspiration (*theopneustia*), through which divine revelation is what it is."

A complication emerged in the nineteenth century when the influence of ideas of exact science contributed towards a theory of literalism based on a materialistic notion of truth. It is this phenomenon that has led writers like Gabriel Hebert and J. K. S. Reid to describe the doctrine of verbal infallibility as peculiarly modern, and not simply a continuation of the doctrine of inspiration held by Protestant Orthodoxy.

The shift to a pseudo-scientific ground proved fatal. For a new but less *pseudo* science of Biblical Criticism was already surveying the ground and beginning to excavate here and there. It led to a complete undermining of the new edifice of an infallible book. It was after the collapse of this edifice, when Kantian moralism seemed the only recourse for theologians in both Europe and America, that an address was delivered in Switzerland entitled "The Strange New World Within the Bible." A young Swiss pastor examined the kind of speech found in holy Scripture and concluded, "It is not the right human thoughts about God which form the content of the Bible, but the right divine thoughts about men . . . The word of God is within the Bible." That was 1916; and the speaker was, of course, Karl Barth.

It was not yet the theology of crisis in its classic lines, where the Biblical authority derived from the "transparency" of the intervening centuries

between the men of Scripture and ourselves. But our concern is with a more mature Barth, who emerged from the "egg-shells" of crisis theology by publishing his crucial book on Anselm in 1931. And we are especially concerned with his Prolegomena to the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*—prolegomena which amount to 1444 pages of English print! This doctrine of the Word so carefully expounded by Barth represents the decisive step that modern theology has taken in rehabilitating the doctrine of Holy Scripture and its authority.

Let us attempt the madness of summing up Barth's doctrine in a few lines. He traces a threefold form of the Word: the eternal Word, the written Word of Scripture, and Church proclamation. But the decisive thread running through his analysis is the christological analogy so familiar now in all his theology: the divine-human nature of Jesus Christ is the God-given analogue for our understanding of revelation. Thus in Scripture there is an analogical correspondence to the person of Jesus Christ—according to the analogy of proper proportionality worked out in its logic by Aristotle and in its "theo-logic" by Thomas Aquinas. This involves a likeness and unlikeness of proportion on each side of the relationship. The Bible is not another hypostatic union, but resembles the divine-human unity of our Lord in that it also has two elements, a true divinity and a true humanity.

> When we necessarily allow for inherent differences, it is exactly the same with the unity of the divine and human word in Holy Scripture . . . As the Word of God in the sign of this prophetic-apostolic word of man Holy Scripture is like the unity of God and man in Jesus Christ. It is neither divine only nor human only. Nor is it a mixture of the two nor a *tertium quid* between them. But in its own way and degree it is very God and very man, i.e., a witness of revelation which itself belongs to revelation, and historically a very human literary document [*Church Dogmatics*, I.2, pp. 499, 501].

Since Lund we have been seeking to let our ecclesiology be informed by our christology. But is it not true also that since 1938 these words of Barth have been a summary of what we have been doing, consciously or not, in our doctrine of Scripture? We have been treating Scripture as both divine and human, for a Word of God along with words of men in one and the same book at one and the same time has seemed to be the answer. Let biblical criticism have free rein within the Bible, for it is word of man; let dogmatic theology have free rein with the Bible, for it is Word of God. This reconciliation has given a measure of peace to men of goodwill on both sides, for the Book now seems to be patient of the best that dogmatic theology can do with it as well as of the worst that biblical criticism can do to it!

I submit that the peace is too easy. It fails to honour the truth that we acknowledge in our use of Scripture—that we cannot and must not divorce Word of God from word of man, dogmatics from criticism. Else we breed a schizophrenic theology: exegetes buried under a mass of minutiae and dogmaticians floating above the results of modern criticism. The problem seems to be that on the christological analogy, the unity of the divine and

human elements now depends on the inspiration and genius of the exegete or interpreter! Yet it is not the principle of christological analogation that is wrong, but the manner of its application. What if Karl Barth had carried further his analogy, as he has worked it out in earlier sections (notably Section 15) and applied it so fruitfully in later ones, such as those on ethics and election? I refer to his emphasis on the true humanity of Jesus Christ as the *new* humanity, his appeal to the post-Chalcedon doctrines of *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia*, for instance. This brings the stress on the positive, the enhypostatic nature of the new humanity, its definite and concrete existence within the assumption by the Word.

The miracle of the incarnation of the Word is such that the sovereign divine decision creates the possibility and actuality of a reactive free human decision, to render perfect obedience, to be the second Adam, the new man. Here is a humanity both true and new, both "fallible" and yet "perfect!" The two Patristic doctrines at issue here were formally adopted as dogmata by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553. In Christology they were meant to guard against the error of a double Christ, leading to docetism on the one hand and ebionitism on the other. As to Scripture, must we not follow these signs in order to prevent the corresponding error of a "double" Word, leading to docetic dogmatics and ebionitic exegesis?

Let us be careful. The "fundamentalist" doctrine of verbal inerrancy raises a christological question: what kind of human nature did the eternal Word assume? and answers it by saying, the flesh of Adam before the Fall, nay rather the flesh of a second Adam who could not fall—*non posse peccare*. The position is expressed in the well-known encyclical of Pope Pius XII: "Just as the substantial Word of God became like to men in all things, sin excepted, Heb. iv. 15, so the words of God, expressed in human language, became in all things like to human speech, error excepted" (*Divino Afflante Spiritu*, 1943).

We need not follow such identification (which is therefore no longer a proper proportionality!) in order to agree that some explanation in terms of "new human words" is in order, some doctrine of "inspiration." Is it not to be expected that the divine economy of a Word that completed Himself in a new humanity, an enhypostatic reality visible in His own Body, should involve as part of this Body a People named Israel? He raised up a holy nation and peculiar people, and led them to this graphic form of witness, a holy Scripture and peculiar Canon. Form and content are unified here; we cannot have this witness except in this form. Thus the Scripture is not a duality of divine and human "elements," but offers itself as one word, not the words of men but of these men of Israel, both truly human and therefore fallible, yet also newly human and therefore in some positive sense "perfect." To quote Professor James Barr of Edinburgh: "The finger of John the Baptist should be given a rest; he is simply not an adequate analogue for the whole range of biblical statement . . . the true analogy for the Scripture as the Word of God is *not* the unity of God and man in the

Incarnation; it is the relation of the Spirit of God to the People of God" (*Scottish Journal of Theology*, March, 1958, pp. 88f.).

Inspiration is a mean between divine revelation and human faith: it is our theological sign that God's Word to man has taken a way within history, characterized by the contingency of history as well as by the interpretative nature of historical records. It points also to the reason for the "sufficient authority" of Scripture as the canon of the Church. Authority for the canon derives from the actuality of revelation itself, of the God who chooses to address us by His Word and Spirit. And authority for revelation cannot be sought outside the circle of God's grace and Israel's faith, Israel old and new. This is a self-authenticating circle, yet not vicious because it is closed not logically but factually, in the faith and the doubt of this People. The written nature of the Church's canon is itself a marvellous sign, reminding us as it serves by ruling and rules by serving, of Him who is the servant-lord, the Canon of our canon itself.

The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews

GEORGE B. CAIRD

I HAVE chosen my theme in the face of a formidable display of learned discouragement. For whatever the commentators may think to be the permanent contribution of the author of Hebrews to Christian theology, most of them have been agreed about one thing—that it is not to be found in his exegesis of the Old Testament; and many of them would be prepared to add that the abiding value of his message is actually obscured by the scriptural argument in which it is embedded. "Far-fetched Old Testament exegesis and obscure Old Testament characters, like Melchizedek, have little or no interest for us today."[1] "This new doctrine, based on an exegesis which to us may appear frigid and artificial, has come to him by a divine illumination and bears the authentic marks of Gnosis."[2] "Our author is true to his training in his employment of the allegorical method of exegesis so characteristic of Philo."[3] "The exegetical methods which the author took over from the Alexandrian school are not ours."[4] "The whole forms a close piece of reasoning which, given the premisses, is valid for its time. Assuming the correctness of the Alexandrian methods of exposition, the writer offers convincing proofs of his thesis that Jesus is at once the 'ideal' High Priest and the Supreme Sacrifice."[5]

Underlying these criticisms is the assumption that the author is a member of the Alexandrian school of Jewish Platonists and that his use of Scripture has close parallels to that of Philo. "The philosophical element in his view of the world and God is fundamentally Platonic. Like Philo and the author of Wisdom, he interprets the past and the present alike in terms of the old theory that the phenomenal is but an imperfect, shadowy transcript of what is eternal and real."[6] Now it is not to be denied that Hebrews has some Alexandrian affinities, for there is a quotation from the Book of Wisdom in the first paragraph; but even some of the most vehement exponents of its Alexandrian origin have been ready to admit that the dependence of the author on Philo was too superficial to be a dominant influence on his theology. Alexander Nairne put his finger on the fundamental difference between the two writers when he wrote: "Philo deals with allegories, the Epistle with symbols."[7] Both writers believe in the existence of two temples:

1. W. Neil, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 22.
2. E. F. Scott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 38.
3. H. A. A. Kennedy, *The Theology of the Epistles*, p. 193.
4. J. Moffatt, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. xlvi.
5. T. H. Robinson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. xviii.
6. J. Moffatt, op. cit., p. xxxi.
7. *The Epistle of Priesthood*, p. 37.

but, while in Hebrews it is the literal, earthly temple which is the shadowy symbol of the real temple in heaven, Philo is thinking allegorically of "two temples belonging to God, one being the world in which the highpriest is his own Son, the Logos, the other being the rational soul" (*De Somn.* i, 37). Both writers make use of the figure of Melchizedek: but to Philo he represents the Logos or Reason ("Reason is a priest, having the Self-existent as his portion, and entertaining high and sublime and magnificent thoughts about him," *Leg. Alleg.* iii, 82), and in Hebrews he is an historical figure who foreshadows the equally historical Christ as highpriest. Further examples of these contrasts have been collected by C. K. Barrett in his contribution to the C. H. Dodd *Festschrift*, in which he draws the thoroughly justified conclusion "that certain features of Hebrews which have often been held to have been derived from Alexandrian Platonism were in fact derived from apocalyptic symbolism."[8] The two worlds of the epistle are the two worlds not of idealism but of eschatology.

During the last ten years there have been others besides Barrett who have been helping to undermine the traditional estimation of Hebrews as a work written under the influence of Alexandrian philosophy. In his Baird Lecture William Manson argued strongly that the theology of Hebrews had its roots in the Hellenistic mission of the church which was inaugurated by Stephen and which in its widest development remained for long untouched by Pauline thought.[9] He lists no fewer than eight parallels between the epistle and Stephen's speech in Acts, the most important of which is the idea of God's call as a call to continuing pilgrimage. C. H. Dodd has given us excellent reasons for believing that many of the Old Testament quotations in Hebrews were used in accordance with a "principle of selection and interpretation" which was commonly accepted throughout the whole of the early church. And other writers, such as G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woollcombe,[10] have undertaken to distinguish between the allegorical exegesis of Alexandria and the typology which is commonly employed by all New Testament writers.

I do not propose to go in any detail into these recent developments. I mention them simply because they have emboldened me to reopen what at one time appeared to be a closed question. The scriptural exegesis of Hebrews has been described as Alexandrian and fantastic. If, as now appears possible, the critics are wrong with the first epithet, is it possible that they are wrong also with the second? I should like to suggest that, so far from being an example of fantastic exegesis which can be totally disregarded by modern Christians, Hebrews is one of the earliest and most successful attempts to define the relation between the Old and New Testaments, and that a large part of the value of the book is to be found in the method of exegesis which was formerly dismissed with contempt.

8. *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology* (ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube), p. 393.
9. *The Epistle to the Hebrews.*
10. *Essays in Typology.*

Let us then lay aside the weight of traditional scholarship and the presuppositions which cling so closely to us, and come with an open mind to ask what the epistle has to tell us about the Old Testament.

1. The Validity of the Old Order

In the first place the author believed that the old covenant was a valid revelation of God. It had been superseded and fulfilled but not abrogated. It contained a genuine foreshadowing of the good things to come, not a Platonic illusion of ultimate reality. God spoke to the fathers by the prophets (1:1); Moses was faithful in all God's house (3:5); Aaron was called by God to his priestly office (5:4); "the message spoken by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution" (2:2); these same angelic guardians of the old order had their part to play in the working out of God's purpose of redemption, for they were "ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who were to obtain salvation" (1:14); and throughout the whole of Old Testament history there were men who, although they lived too soon to see the realization of the promises of God in which they had put their trust, nevertheless obtained a good report through that faith which secured for them the assured possession of the unseen objects of their hope (11:39), and which made them, even in the midst of their earthly pilgrimage, inhabitants of the heavenly Zion that was to become their eternal home (12:22–4).

There is nothing here of the Pauline contrast between the transitory régime which brought condemnation and death and the permanent régime of justification and life, between Mount Sinai in Arabia whose children are slaves and Mount Zion whose children are free. For in Paul's experience the law was not merely incomplete; it had claimed completeness, claimed to be a way of salvation and to give that life which in fact it had no power to give, and just because it had exceeded its God-given function it had become a demonic agency which enslaved its adherents. But in Hebrews part of the validity of the old order is its constant disclaimer of finality. Throughout the Old Testament period men were constantly being warned not to think more highly of their present religious status than they ought to think, and, if they were men of faith, they confessed themselves to be strangers and sojourners to whom the old covenant offered no abiding city.

It has often been remarked that, when the author of Hebrews quotes from the Old Testament, he quotes it as the voice of God. The Old Testament retained its validity for him because in it God had spoken to the fathers, so that those who read it could hear in it the living and abiding word of God. They could not, indeed, hear in it the full and final word of salvation, spoken only in Christ, by which alone they could be led on to their destined perfection, but they could hear anticipations of the gospel and the call of God to live by faith in that better thing which he had reserved for the latter days. In this connexion it is worthy of note that the opening statement of the

book, that God spoke by the prophets, is not meant to be taken in any narrow sense, as though the prophetic corpus were being singled out from the rest of the Old Testament for special mention. Of the twenty-nine quotations in the epistle, twelve are from the Pentateuch, five from the prophets, eleven from Psalms, and one from Proverbs. Of the fifty-three allusions, thirty-nine are to the Pentateuch, eleven to the prophets, two to Psalms and one to Proverbs. This can only mean that the author regarded the whole of the Old Testament as a prophetic work, both because God spoke in it to his people and because in it he everywhere directed their attention to the eschatological future.

2. The Self-confessed Inadequacy of the Old Order

We come, then, in the second place to the main argument of the epistle, which has all too often been misstated. It is not the purpose of the author to prove the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old, nor to establish the inadequacy of the old order. His interest is in the confessed inadequacy of the old order. His ultimate purpose, of course, is pastoral, for he has been appalled at the spiritual lethargy, the slackening of morale, which has overtaken his friends, and he writes to summon them to that constant striving towards maturity of faith which Christianity demands and makes possible. To this end he attempts to show them that they are living in the day of grace and opportunity to which the whole history and education of the people of God have been directed. His argument falls into four sections, each having as its core an Old Testament passage which declares the ineffectiveness and symbolic or provisional nature of the Old Testament religious institutions. All other scriptural references are ancillary to these four (Pss. 8, 95, 110, and Jer. 31), which control the drift of the argument.

Of these four passages the one which is most readily adaptable to our author's purpose is the last one, Jeremiah's prophecy of the new covenant. "Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for a second. For he finds fault with them when he says: 'The days will come, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel . . . ' In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away" (8:6–13). Here is a perfectly sound piece of exegesis. Jeremiah predicted the establishment of a new covenant because he believed the old one to be inadequate for the religious needs of sinful men. The sacrifices of the old covenant were a perpetual reminder of sin and of man's need for atonement, but what men needed was the effective removal of sin, so that it could no longer barricade the way into the inner presence of God.

The exegesis of the other three passages is almost exactly parallel to that which we have examined. Ps. 110 describes the enthronement of a king who

is also to be priest in perpetuity according to the order of Melchizedek. The psalm was written at a time when the temple cultus was in the hands of the levitical priests. Why should anyone dream of a new order of priesthood unless he felt the present order to be deficient? "If perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood . . . what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? . . . On the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect): on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God" (7:11–19). It is important to recognize that throughout his treatment of Melchizedek our author is concerned solely with the exegesis of Ps. 110. He carries us back to the story of Genesis 14 not to compose a fanciful and allegorical *midrash* on that chapter after the manner of Philo, but rather because he wishes to answer the very modern question: "What did the words 'priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek' mean to the psalmist who wrote them?" He clearly believed (and had dominical authority for believing) that the Psalm was a messianic prophecy and that the Psalmist, feeling the need of a new priesthood to mediate between God and man, found the prototype of that priesthood in the shadowy figure of Melchizedek who, at the dawn of Israel's history, had stood on the Godward side of Abraham, so that through him Abraham was enabled to draw near to God.

Still proceeding backwards, we come to that section which deals with Ps. 95, which summons the people of God to seize *today* the opportunity forfeited through unbelief by their fathers, the opportunity of entering into God's rest. Here again the same exegetical method is followed as we have seen in the later sections. The whole elaborate argument arises out of the question: "What did the Psalmist mean by entering into God's rest?" This rest was clearly first offered to Israel in the wilderness, since it was their disobedience then that caused God to swear in his wrath that they should not enter it. Does this then mean that the rest which they forfeited is to be equated with cessation from earthly wanderings and entry into Canaan? No! because a later generation entered Canaan under Joshua and, if that had been what was meant by God's rest, there would have been no need for the Psalmist later still to renew the offer of rest and the warning not to lose it through hardness of heart. This rest, then, must be a spiritual rest of which the entry into Canaan was only a symbol. It is in fact to be identified with God's own rest on which he entered at the end of his labours of creation. And the offer of this rest to man remains an unfulfilled promise until the coming of Christ. "If Joshua had given them rest, God would not speak later of another day. So then, there remains outstanding a sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God's rest also ceases from his labours as God did from his" (4:8–10).

These three sections of the argument are stylistically linked by an unfulfilled condition: "if Joshua had given them rest . . ."; "if perfection had

been attainable through the levitical priesthood . . ."; "if that first covenant had been faultless. . . ." All three passages, in fact, have to do with the unfulfilled promises of the old régime. The opening section lacks this device, but in other respects it follows the same pattern. It is concerned with the exegesis of Ps. 8, with its picture of man, humbled for a season but destined for glory, honour and universal authority. Here again the Old Testament expresses an aspiration and a vision to which it was unable to furnish the fulfilment. For, as our author remarks, "We do not yet see everything in subjection to man" (2:8). The psalm is quoted only at 2:6–8, but it controls the argument of the preceding chapter, for from the first mention of angels at 1:5 throughout the formidable catena of texts in ch. 1 the author's one aim is to illustrate the theme of the psalm that man has been destined by God to a glory excelling that of the angels and that this destiny has been achieved by Christ, both individually and representatively, as the pioneer of man's salvation who came to lead many sons into their destined glory.

By these four arguments the epistle seeks to establish its main thesis, that the Old Testament is not only an incomplete book but an avowedly incomplete book, which taught and teaches men to live by faith in the good things that were to come. It had a doctrine of man which remained unfulfilled until the coming of Jesus, an offer of divine rest which remained outstanding because there was no way by which God's message of grace could be mixed with faith in those who heard it. It had a priesthood and looked for a better one to draw men near to God. It had sacrificial ordinances and knew them to be ineffective in dealing with sin.

3. Christ, Aaron and Melchizedek

We have not yet, however, exhausted the significance which the Old Testament had for the author of Hebrews. For between the ineffective institutions of the old Israel and the effective work of Christ there are real and meaningful parallels. Let us begin with the conception of highpriesthood. Christ is our great highpriest, and our author is at some pains to show that there was a real correspondence between his office and that of Aaron. Both were chosen from among men, both were appointed to bring offerings for sin, both were qualified by sympathy to represent ignorant and wayward men, both were ordained to office by God. But it is not enough for us at this point to invoke the magic word typology, as though we explained everything by calling Aaron the type of Christ. For Christ as highpriest is related not only to Aaron but also to Melchizedek, and related in a totally different fashion. The words which the epistle uses to denote these relationships are shadow (*skia*) in the case of the Aaronic priesthood and the cultus for which it was responsible (10:1) and likeness (*homoiotēs*) in the case of Melchizedek (7:15).

The Old Testament cultus, we are told, had "but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities" (10:1). The

priesthood had all the outward trappings of true priesthood, but not the essential quality of enabling men to draw near to God. The sacrifices had the appearance of true sacrifice, but not the power to purify the conscience from dead works. What then is the permanent significance of these outworn institutions? "The Epistle describes the sacrifice of Christ in language borrowed from Levitical use, but connects it in no other way with Levitical sacrifices. They were not types fulfilled in His sacrifice. They were shadows which pass away and leave nothing but a picturesque language behind them."[11] A picturesque language! A picture of an unknown fruit resembles the real thing in all except reality: it will not satisfy your hunger, but it may help you to recognize the real fruit if you should come across it. Similarly, the Old Testament priesthood and sacrifices were only shadow pictures of reality, but they prepared men to appreciate the reality when it appeared in Jesus Christ. God spoke to the fathers in the cultus in order that they might become familiar with a picture language without which they could neither apprehend nor convey the full scope of his later word of salvation.

It is a very different matter with Melchizedek of whom it is said that "resembling the Son of God he continues a priest for ever" (7:3). His priesthood was no mere shadow, but partook in some degree of the reality of the priesthood of Christ. It was a genuine anticipation. For in Jesus, we are told, "another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life" (7:15f.). That is to say, Melchizedek represents a natural priesthood which depends not upon heredity or outward appointment but on the inner, spiritual resources of a man's character. Melchizedek, neither inheriting nor inaugurating any priestly succession, blessed Abraham and through him Abraham drew near to God. I do not believe that our author would wish to claim that throughout the whole Old Testament period Melchizedek was the sole representative of the order of natural priests. He certainly believed that throughout this period there were men of faith who "endured seeing him that is invisible" (11:27). Must we not add that a priest with such faith could have penetrated behind the shadows of the cultus and led others in some measure at least into the presence of God? The point, however, is that in Melchizedek, whether he be one man or a whole order of priests, the Old Testament through Ps. 110 appears to recognize the existence of a priesthood radically different from that of Aaron and to look for its full realization in God's Messiah.

4. The Contribution of the Old Testament to Christian Faith and Worship

What, then, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews is the permanent contribution of the Old Testament to Christian faith and worship? I have been suggesting that the contribution is fourfold.

11. A. Nairne, op. cit., p. 181.

(*a*) Firstly, the Old Testament provides aspirations to which only Christ supplies the fulfilment, questions to which only Christ furnishes the answers. It offers a vision of man's perfection as the wielder of supreme authority under God, a dream of the day when man will cease from his labours and enter into God's own rest, a longing for free access into the divine presence, a fervent desire to be free of sin's slow stain.

(*b*) Secondly, it provides picture language for the preaching of the gospel. In this respect Hebrews has something important to say to those who are concerned with the nature of religious language and the problem of communication.

(*c*) Thirdly, the Old Testament provides partial anticipations of the realities which were fully present in Jesus.

(*d*) Finally, the Old Testament provides, as we see in the eleventh chapter, models of faith, men and women whose lives were securely grounded in a confidence in the future manifestation of God's redeeming power.

Our author does not, of course, argue from the imperfections of the old covenant to the perfections of the new. He starts from Christ and from the Christian experience of salvation which he shares with his readers. He goes back to the Old Testament with his ears already attuned to the voice of him who has spoken from heaven. But the Old Testament enables him to make his new experience articulate, coherent and reasonable. Above all, it enables him to present Christ as the climax of the ongoing, historic purpose of God, the culmination of Israel's long pilgrimage, in the hope that his readers will return with new zeal to their own pilgrimage and find that it leads them also to him who is the perfecter of their faith.

Book Reviews

More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls: New Scrolls and New Interpretations, with Translations of Important Recent Discoveries. By M. Burrows. New York: Viking Press (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada), 1958. Pp. xiii, 434. $7.25.

The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies (*The Haskell Lectures 1956–1957*). By F. M. Cross, Jr. Garden City, N.Y. and Toronto: Doubleday & Co., 1958. Pp. xvii, 196. $5.00.

Most readers interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls will know the name of Millar Burrows. Prof. Burrows was Director of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem at the time when the scrolls were first seen by Western eyes, and it was he who first published some of these famous texts both in facsimile and transcription. Within a very short time Burrows and his former student, Brownlee, had published the editions of the first Isaiah Scroll, the Habakkuk Commentary and the Manual of Discipline. Burrows felt—and every Biblical student is grateful to him for it—that these texts ought to be in the hands of everyone as soon as possible. Later entrants to the field have not followed this wise and generous example. The other major scrolls were published considerably later by Sukenik (these comprise the second Isaiah Scrool, the Hymns, and the War Scroll). The Genesis Apocryphon has now in large part been published by Avigad and Sukenik. The fragments from Cave 1 were definitively published by the Clarendon Press in 1955 (*Discoveries in the Judaean Desert I* by D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik). For the rest only the occasional fragment is published here and there, giving scholars a taste of the wealth of material still to come.

This delay in publication is the result of a considered policy. Not until all the fragments of a particular cave are purchased, cleaned, deciphered and edited will the materials of that cave be released for publication in a definitive edition. That only the Scroll team should actually be allowed to work on the fragments is naturally the only sensible course of action. That each member of the team should be entrusted with the final preparation of a full edition of the fragments under his care is also obvious. But this reviewer for one is beginning to question the wisdom of the cloak and dagger secrecy surrounding the work. Admittedly it is quite impossible to publish immediately every new fragment as soon as it is added to the Jerusalem Museum Scrollery; surely no scholar would make so unreasonable a demand. What at least one scholar is asking for is that instead of articles by members of the Scroll team in which statements are made based on unpublished texts

(since these are not available to anyone else, no one is able to check the sources but must impotently rely on such statements as being correct interpretations of the evidence), we be given photographs of such fragments as do exist.

Let me be concrete by giving an example which I know best. Five years ago Frank Cross published a fragment of a Samuel text from Cave 4 which is obviously related to the *Vorlage* (underlying Hebrew text) of the Septuagint. In a sense this could be revolutionary to the textual criticism of the Greek Old Testament which happens to be one of this reviewer's chief fields of research. Since the lines of research along which I had been working were apparently rendered antiquated and inaccurate by this text form, I desisted from further Septuagint work. The following year while I was in Jerusalem I was permitted to study these texts for about two hours. At that time I was told that Cave 4 Biblical texts would not appear for another year and a half. That was four years ago, and a recent rumour has it that it may be another decade before these are published. No scholar wishes to ask for special consideration, but if it is true that final publication is to be much delayed (fragments are still coming into Jerusalem), it seems to me that provisional publication of infra-red photographs is necessarily of immediate concern to everyone.

But to return to Burrows. In 1955 he published an excellent and thorough account concerning the Scrolls and their significance in which the extensive literature which had sprung up was carefully evaluated and summarized (*The Dead Sea Scrolls*. New York: The Viking Press). That was a judicious and thorough account. In fact, it was an exciting book, the one book that every one who wanted to know about the Scrolls simply had to read.

Since that book was written an immense amount of further study and writing on the scrolls has taken place. In fact, a few more texts have since appeared (both the volumes of Avigad and Sukenik and that of Barthélemy and Milik have appeared since). It was time for another digest and evaluation of all this subsequent literature by Burrows, and this has now been published as a companion volume under the title *More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls*.

This book is not as exciting as the former. In fact, it is often rather wearisome. But this is not the author's fault. The fact is that though a great deal has been written—almost 300 books and articles—there just is not that much more light on the Dead Sea Scrolls about which to write.

The book is divided into eight parts in somewhat the same fashion as the first volume. These deal successively with 1. The Story Continued; 2. Christian Origins in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls; 3. Results for Old Testament Studies; 4. The Origin of the Qumran Sect; 5. The Identification of the Sect; 6. The Beliefs of the Sect; 7. Organization and Rites of the Sect, and 8. Translations. Readers will probably be particularly interested in the sane course which Burrows steers in the second part dealing with the problem

of origins of the primitive Christian Church in the light of the Qumran literature. His study of the Scrolls has not uncovered anything which will change the historical faith of the New Testament. In the midst of so many wild and fanciful statements made about parallels between Qumran and the New Testament, it is heartening to hear a sound scholar summarize his study in the following words (p. 132):

> An open-minded review of all the evidence shows, I am convinced, that the similarities between the New Testament and the Dead Sea Scrolls have been considerably exaggerated. There may have been some contact or perhaps contacts, direct or indirect, between the apostolic church and the community of Qumran. Several possibilities have been shown, but contrary to the opinion of most recent writers on the scrolls, I cannot see anything more than vague possibilities. What the Dead Sea Scrolls actually demonstrate has been well summed up by Albright: they show that the writers of the New Testament 'drew from a common reservoir of terminology and ideas which were well known to the Essenes and'—this I would emphasize—'presumably familiar also to other Jewish sects of the period.'

Cross's book consists of five separate studies given at Oberlin as the Haskell Lectures for the year 1956–57. Cross is one of the original Scroll team, has worked on the scroll fragments longer than anybody else, and is probably better qualified to speak with authority on the Scrolls and their significance than any other person. Since this work was intended for oral presentation, technical matters are placed in extensive footnotes which make the book a usable tool for the specialist as well as for the general reader.

Unlike Burrows' book this is not intended as a comprehensive survey of all phases of Scroll study. Rather Cross has taken five separate topics and dealt with them as individual studies. The first of these is an account of the finds at Qumran. Since this is by now old news, Cross deals mainly with the finds up to the time of his writing. Included in this lecture is a catalogue of the library in which are sketched some of the highlights of the unpublished materials.

The second lecture, "The Essenes, the People of the Scrolls," identifies the Qumran sectaries as Essenes. Cross feels that the time has come to stop referring to the Qumranis as neo-Essenes, pseudo-Essenes, or crypto-Essenes, and to admit once for all that the group described in Josephus and Philo as Essenes is identical with the Qumranis. Qumran was the headquarters (the *yahad*?) of the sect, settlements of which were scattered throughout Palestine. If this identification be admitted, and this reviewer suggests that it is high time, then the author's adoption of B. J. Roberts' principle that "the scrolls now become the yardstick by which Philo and Josephus are measured" is methodologically correct. Then the archaeological and literary evidence of Qumran become primary sources, whereas the accounts in Philo and Josephus are only secondary.

The next study deals with Essene origins. Unfortunately for the historian

allusions to events as they concerned the Qumranis are couched in veiled terms, and only a half-dozen actual names have come to light (Antiochus, Demetrius, the house of Absalom, the Kittayim, Aemilius, and Selamsiyon). The two prominent figures are the "righteous teacher" and the "wicked priest," and a great deal of verbiage has been produced in attempting to identify these figures. Cross makes a good case for identifying the Wicked Priest as Simon the Maccabee (or possibly his predecessor Jonathan). This identification certainly fits the palaeographic and archaeological evidence, and from a literary point of view is unobjectionable. Cross of course considers the Romans to be the Kittayim, a position which seems to me to be now hardly disputable.

In view of Cross's special preoccupation with Cave 4 Biblical mss. it is but natural that one lecture should be devoted to the Old Testament at Qumran. Prior to the Qumran discoveries the earliest Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament were medieval. Practically nothing was known of the pre-history of the Masoretic text except for the pre-Masoretic translation of the Old Testament into Greek, and the Aramaic Targumim. Since the texts of the Old Testament presupposed by the Septuagint were recensionally different from MT, the Septuagint was invaluable for the textual criticism of the Old Testament. But about the history of the Hebrew text *per se* nothing was known. Now with Qumran over a hundred Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament are extant (though mainly only in small fragments). Some of these are related to the *Vorlage* of the Septuagint; others, to the Samaritan text. The possibility suddenly emerges that an actual textual history of the Hebrew Old Testament will some day be written. Frank Cross is certainly one of those who is doing a major part in the writing of that history.

A final lecture naturally deals with the relations of the Essenes and the primitive New Testament Church. Cross fortunately does not simply list all kinds of parallels between the Qumran and the New Testament literatures as so many have done. He rather propounds the thesis that the *Essenes prove to be the bearers, and in no small part the producers, of the apocalyptic tradition of Judaism.* The common eschatological language and motifs show a New Testament awareness of Essene thought, and it is in this realm and from this point of view that the continuities between the two groups are to be understood. As Qumran is changing the textual perspectives of the Old Testament scholar, so is its literature giving radically new insights to the New Testament specialist concerning the Jewish background to the writings of the primitive church.

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The Life, the Question and the Answer: Fifteen Questions about the Life of Jesus. By A. J. Ebbutt. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1957. Pp. xiv and 170. Cloth $2.50; paper $1.50.

Dr. Ebbutt, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Mount Allison University, has written a useful teaching book for laymen which is a good springboard into Christology. In clear language, with technical terms generally well defined, he examines fifteen questions arising from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Orthodox, liberal, and modern solutions to these are listed, followed by Dr. Ebbutt's own explanations. A great deal of ground is covered, and theories are put forward which cry out for elaboration, but it is nevertheless helpful to have this sort of text-book focussing attention on the chief theological problems in the life of Jesus. Whatever we may conclude about Dr. Ebbutt's solutions, we are here made to face issues which too many ministers tend to slip past in their preaching, and which laymen sometimes wonder about but seldom pursue. The book will serve a valuable purpose if it leaves some Christians with the urge to tidy up their Christology in order to present an intelligible witness in our age.

Many readers will take violent exception to some of Dr. Ebbutt's explanations. The nature miracles are rejected as unworthy of Jesus, the judgment being made according to the standard of "the total picture we have of Jesus" (p. 62). Such a standard is necessary, but it is essential to observe how easily it can become subjective. "Our total picture of Jesus" can be dangerously twisted by our particular biases. It is to be wondered if Dr. Ebbutt is not falling victim to this when he says (p. 64): ". . . if we have reason to suspect the historicity of raising the dead in two out of three cases, the presumption is certainly against authenticity in the third case."

Chapter thirteen on the Resurrection rejects the stories of the empty tomb as post-Pauline in origin and as the necessary rationalization springing from the Jewish doctrine of the resurrection of the body. This reviewer expresses dissatisfaction with the evidence given against the authenticity of the empty tomb narratives and also with the lack of an adequate discussion of Jesus' experience of death. Is it consistent with the total picture we have of Jesus that He would cruelly leave His disciples in the depths of despair for two days if He was "immortal from the moment He died on the Cross" (p. 127)?

It is to be doubted whether this book fulfills its title. Dealing primarily with the intellectual difficulties involved in understanding the life of Jesus, it does not reach the point of confronting us personally with that "Life" which poses the deepest "Question" for the "Answer" of faith, except very briefly in one paragraph at the end of chapter fourteen. Certainly, however, it is effective in clearing away the overgrowth from the Gospel and in preparing the way for modern man to meet Jesus Christ with his mind as well as his emotions.

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The Image of God in Man according to Cyril of Alexandria. (*The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity*, ed. by J. Quasten, no. 14). By WALTER J. BURGHARDT, S.J. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1957. Pp. xvi and 194. $3.00.

THIS SCHOLARLY STUDY, whose technical competence is indicated by its publication in "The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity," edited by the eminent patrologist, Johannes Quasten, meets a real need in the field of historical theology. The theological work of St. Cyril of Alexandria has been strangely neglected by modern scholars—most obviously, perhaps, by those of the English-speaking world. The only attempt at a complete edition of his writings is that of Aubert (published in Paris, 1638, and later reprinted with some additions in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*), while English translations have been confined to his commentaries on St. John and St. Luke (the latter being translated from a Syriac version) and to selected anti-Nestorian writings. As for secondary studies, Fr. Burghardt's fairly comprehensive bibliography tells the tale; of fifteen full-length studies and dictionary or periodical articles bearing primarily on Cyril's thought, only one item is in English. The explanation can hardly be found in the uninviting style of a good deal of his work, since even less engaging authors have attracted their share of editors, translators and commentators. Nor is it to be looked for in the mere fact that a lingering suspicion of Monophysite heresy has clung to his name; after all, even a formal condemnation by an Ecumenical Council has failed to discourage a series of attempts to vindicate the orthodoxy of Cyril's arch-enemy, Nestorius. The basic reasons for Cyril's modern unpopularity are probably to be found partly in his intransigent opposition to a type of Christology which much recent theology has, rightly or wrongly, found congenial, and partly in his reputation for dirty politics. Since, however, as judicious a work as the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* can describe him as "the most brilliant representative of the Alexandrian theological tradition," and as learned an historian as Tixeront can say that "in penetration and force of mind he ranks first among the Greek Fathers," it may perhaps be argued that Cyril's thought deserves more careful and dispassionate study than it commonly receives. On this ground alone, Fr. Burghardt's substantial essay should be welcomed.

It is made doubly valuable, however, by its particular line of approach to Cyril's teaching. As Burghardt himself points out, "the patristic conception of the image of God in man is of uncommon significance for historical theology, because it enters so intimately into—in fact, sometimes commands—the anthropology of the Fathers, their vision of man as privileged in paradise, as disfigured by sin, as restored through Christ" (p. viii). This broad interest controls Burghardt's treatment of the theme, with the result that his book provides us with a comprehensive account of Cyril's understanding of the divine economy in creation and in redemption.

The first two chapters give us a discussion of Cyril's basic concept of the divine image, in the setting of earlier as well as of contemporary theology. In particular, we are shown how Cyril, like most modern exegetes, refuses to distinguish between *eikon* (image) and *homoiosis* (likeness), but also how, unlike most recent scholars, he locates the image and likeness of God in man's soul, not in his body—in this following the Alexandrian exegetical tradition. Chapters III–VIII present a full outline of the main features of the image of God, as Cyril understood it, under the aspects of reason, freedom, dominion over nature, sanctifying grace and virtue, incorruptibility or immortality, and sonship to God. Chapter IX digresses from the main line of argument to show how, despite his conviction of woman's inferiority to man, Cyril ultimately insists on her equality in the possession of the image. Finally, in the last two chapters, Burghardt tackles the complex question of the effect of sin on the divine image, and presents Cyril's doctrine of the "recapitulation" of original man in Christ, the incarnate Word.

Obviously, so full yet compact an exposition will not satisfy every critic at every point, but on the whole Fr. Burghardt's presentation is more than adequate. He works from the best available Greek texts, and shows a firm grasp of the important secondary materials. His work is a good buy for anyone who wants to make the acquaintance of Cyril as a great constructive theologian, in addition to being an important contribution to patristic scholarship.

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The Revolt of Martin Luther. By ROBERT HERDORN FIFE. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1957. Pp. 726. $9.75.

SINCE World War II there has been a tremendous revival of interest in Luther and the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century in the English speaking world. Two factors may account for this phenomenon. In a small measure it is a reaction to the Luther-to-Hitler myth which flourished in some circles of the British Isles during the war. But to a larger extent it is a result of the ecumenical movement of our times.

The Luther Renaissance began on the European continent at the close of World War I. It was only after the second war that it made itself felt in Great Britain and America. As to the British situation, it was especially Swedish scholarship that served as a stimulus to a number of British theologians such as Philip S. Watson, Gordon Rupp, J. Atkinson *et alii*. To-day, then, there is in English no dearth of biographical literature on Luther nor of reliable studies dealing with the Reformer's theological views.

The volume under discussion is a valuable addition to the Luther biographies.

Strange as it may seem, the author is not a theologian, but rather a professor emeritus of Germanic languages and literatures at Columbia University. His previous book, *Young Luther*, was published in 1928 and was based on lectures delivered, at the invitation of the late Archbishop Soederblom, at Uppsala University, Sweden.

In the present volume the author presents an interesting biography of Luther covering the years from his childhood until the Diet at Worms, 1521, the formative years of the Reformer's life during which his theological views were molded and his break with the church of Rome became an accomplished fact.

The treatment of Luther is based on a careful examination of the available sources and of critical works, both Protestant and Catholic. The approach is basically psychological, describing, as the book flap tells us, the development that led Luther, the student, "immersed in Scholasticism, to the monk-professor who rejected Scholastic learning and in the course of his interpretation of Augustine and Paul formulated his own doctrine of faith." This semi-detached attitude (note also the word "Revolt" in the caption of the book) has of course its special merit. The book is indeed not a piece of Protestant propaganda. The limitations of the volume are, however, precisely along these lines. The incisive event in Luther's life, the so-called "tower experience," is treated too much in a formal way as a mere "wrestling with resistant material in the traditional methods of exegesis" (p. 199). Of course it was that, but it was much more. Many a Humanist derided Scholasticism but did not, as Luther did, discover the Gospel. But this was for Luther the all-important event of his life. Throughout his career he repudiated Scholasticism as a perversion of the Gospel, not as an antiquated form of philosophy.

A similar naturalistic approach colours the author's interpretation of Luther's attitude toward the peasants. Martin's "urban culture" is held to be responsible for the fact that he showed allegedly "little sympathy for the peasantry and scant understanding for their problems" and that he denounced their rebellion as murder and theft (p. 7), whereas in his *Admonition to Peace* Luther admitted that some of the demands of the peasants were right and just and that the peasantry had been suffering unjustly at the hands of ravenous princes and bishops. He who quotes Luther as speaking of the peasants as "murderous and thieving hordes" ought also to inform his readers that he in the same breath called the princes "bloody dogs, scoundrels and hogs, wolves, boars, bears and lions" (Philadelphia Edition, IV, p. 280). The reason why Luther declined to be identified with the demands of the peasants was religious. In his eyes, the peasants were sadly confused about the meaning of Christian liberty, confounding Law and Gospel, the law of nature and the law of Christ, the kingdom of the left and the kingdom of the right hand of God.

Another limitation of the book is to be seen in the author's unawareness of important studies on Luther since the last war. In fixing, for example, the

date of the "tower experience" Dr. Fife sides with those Protestant scholars who were wont to locate it in the period of the first lectures on the Psalms, *c.* 1513. Yet no scholar dealing with the subject can afford to ignore Saarnivaara's trenchant criticism of this view and his detailed analysis of the famous autobiographical sketch penned by Luther a year and a half before his death (U. Saarnivaara, *Luther Discovers the Gospel*, 1951).

These misgivings notwithstanding, Dr. Fife has given us a book which ought to find its way into all theological libraries and which will, we hope, be acquired by many of our Protestant pastors.

Otto W. Heick

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Freedom of the Will. By Jonathan Edwards. Edited by Paul Ramsey. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957. Pp. xii, 494. $6.50.

Jonathan Edwards is too widely known for his famous sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* and too narrowly known for his solid theological and philosophical works. Too many people dismiss him as a revivalist in the period of The Great Awakening and as a result never come to grips with the thought of one of the greatest minds America has yet produced.

A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will which is supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame was written at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in the early months of 1773 and published at Boston in October, 1774. Within 100 years the book had gone through nineteen editions. Counting the times it has been included in Edwards' collected works it has been reprinted twenty-three times.

Freedom of the Will is the more remarkable when we consider that it is the work of a busy minister in a frontier mission. Preaching, instructing Indians, protecting their interests from the exploitation of greedy whites, and concern for the affairs of surrounding churches, all made heavy demands on his time. Yet he still found time to keep abreast of contemporary intellectual movements as his writings clearly show.

Freedom of the Will is the first volume to be published in a new edition of Edwards' works being prepared under the general editorship of Perry Miller of Harvard. This volume is very ably edited by Paul Ramsey of Princeton. Of particular value is the 128 page introduction which includes biographical materials, a statement of the theological problem, the philosophical argument, the relation of Edwards to John Locke, sketches of Arminian opponents whom Edwards singles out for rebuttal, and a short section on textual peculiarities and the history of publication. For the

reader who begins to read Edwards for the first time with this book the theological section could have been enlarged considerably by way of describing Edwards' general theological position.

In writing the *Freedom of the Will* Edwards was concerned with combatting the rising tide of Arminianism which was extremely critical of post-Dordrechtian Calvinism, claiming that it was deterministic and inconsistent with any notion of human culpability. Edwards, on the other hand, felt that Arminian presuppositions did violence to the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, undercut sound evangelism, made mockery of the plain sense of Scripture, destroyed any real basis for human culpability, and furthermore, was philosophically inconsistent.

Edwards rightly sees that the difference between himself and the Arminians turns around their different notions of the will. The Arminian notion, he says, rests on three presuppositions: self-determination, indifference or equilibrium, and contingency. Such a notion Edwards sets out to show is empirically undemonstrable, philosophically inconsistent and theologically unsound.

For his own definition of the will Edwards is indebted to Lockean empiricism but not slavishly so. The will is that by which the mind chooses anything. The will is inclined to a motive. A motive has "some sort and degree of tendency, or advantage, to move or excite the will, previous to the effect, or the act of the will excited" (p. 142). Thus the will "always is as the greatest apparent good is" (p. 142). The will inclines to what it prefers. What it prefers is what appears most agreeable to it. Motive and volition are therefore causally connected. But the causal connection is morally not naturally or mechanistically necessary. Moral necessity is a form of philosophical necessity which is "really nothing else than the full and fixed connexion between things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition that affirms something to be true" (p. 152).

The mind, then, is able to incline to what it prefers, the strongest motive. It is not able to incline to what it does not prefer. That would be a contradiction. Man's freedom is found in his freedom to do what he chooses. If he is possessed of a natural disability, a physical impediment for example, he is not free. But since he can do what he wills, at this point he is morally culpable. His will is only inclined to the greatest *apparent* good, not necessarily the greatest *real* good. Only God's intervention can make the greatest apparent good and the greatest real good identical. This is grace. And since the volition is identical with the greatest apparent good a man participates to that extent in the salvation process. Thus Edwards feels he has honoured God's initiative and at the same time escaped the kind of criticism which is levelled at the determinist.

Arminianism, on the other hand, by denying the principle of causation (moral necessity), denies the possibility of salvation; makes impossible any response to extrinsic influences, commands, invitations or challenges, and

makes God captive to millions of contingent wills and assigns Him the task of patching up His chaotic universe in consequence of such contingency.

Edwards' answer may not satisfy everyone, but all Arminians and Calvinists today, both of the secular and ecclesiastical variety, must come to grips with the arguments he raises. No one will dismiss Edwards without feeling that he has wrestled with a man of gigantic intellectual stature.

ALLAN L. FARRIS

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Rembrandt and the Gospel. By W. A. VISSER 'T. HOOFT. Translated by K. GREGOR SMITH. London: SCM (Toronto: Ryerson Press), 1957. Pp. 192 and plates XXXII. $5.00.

THE CENTRAL THOUGHT of the book is as follows. Rembrandt is the great biblical painter. He became that by a conscious break with the idealizing art of Italy: "Rembrandt finally turned his back on the glorification of man which had become the classical ideal and which reached its zenith in baroque art . . . he has learned that it is a humble thing to be a man." The Bible compelled Rembrandt to the discovery that beauty must serve truth and only then did his art become truly biblical, "representing the biblical events in the spirit of the Bible."

This sweeping argument cannot pass the test of historical accuracy. Rembrandt's break with Italian art is a myth. He was, in fact, inspired by Italian ideas expressed in Caravaggesque art, then spreading in the Netherlands through the activity of the school of Utrecht. Realistic treatment of religious subject matter made Caravaggio's work extremely controversial. Nor was he an isolated phenomenon in Italy. Further, the style called Mannerism, which reigned during most of the 16th century, is interpreted by eminent historians of art as demonstrating the *Entwertung* of man. Italian art was by no means an uninterrupted glorification of man.

The central thesis of this book is unfounded. The interpretation of developments in Christian art is made to serve a preconceived notion. Oversimplification blinds the author to all complexities and degrees.

Nobody will deny that Rembrand's position as the painter of the Bible is unique; nor that a good deal of Baroque art treating religious subject-matter is thoroughly worldly and external; but these things cannot be connected in any simple, dogmatic way. The maxim that beauty must serve truth is of little practical value when it comes to probe the authenticity of Christian conviction in religious art.

The book places Rembrandt in a vacuum, just as it puts the whole problem of Christian art in a timeless, theoretical sphere by deducing stylistic principles from theological beliefs.

The author's remarks on Rembrandt's understanding of the Incarnation

are valuable; it is all the more regrettable that the artist's insight is made to help prove the exclusive validity of one particular kind of Christian art.

It is unthinkable to me that a mind essentially sympathetic towards the arts should arrive at a thesis like the one found in this book. Theologians reflecting on art have often been very confused in their thinking. The tragedy is that in many cases the lack of appreciation of art, caused by the want of artistic sense and experience, is buttressed and sanctified by theological considerations. This book will aggravate that situation.

The selection of plates could have been more articulate and imaginative, especially if some detailed photographs had been included. The quality of reproduction is moderately good.

JOHN NIEUWSTRATEN

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The Prophetic Voice in Protestant Christianity. By RALPH G. WILBURN. St. Louis, Missouri: The Bethany Press, 1956. Pp. 298. $3.00.

THE AUTHOR of this book, a theologian of the Disciples of Christ in the U.S.A., has provided a full length study of the problem of authority in contemporary Protestantism, and attempted to restate in modern terms what would once have been called a "liberal evangelical" position. The volume consists of three more or less independent studies on "The Perennial Values of Protestantism," "Protestantism and the Problem of Revelation," and "Protestantism and the Contemporary Challenge of Christian Unity." These are linked by common presuppositions about Protestantism as a prophetic religion calling for the continuous reform of the empirical church and requiring to be expressed in a non-creedal, anti-dogmatic, undenominational form of church life.

Of the three sections, that on revelation is the most elaborate and the most useful, and provides a very fair sample of contemporary discussion of the theme of revelation as existential event. The position adopted is related to those of Brunner and Tillich, indeed the treatment is in parts almost an exposition of Tillich. All of this, however, Dr. Wilburn turns to the service of his basic thesis that true Christianity is non-creedal. He accepts half of Archbishop Temple's famous statement that "there is no such thing as revealed truth" but rejects the other half: that "there are truths of revelation, i.e. propositions which express the results of correct thinking concerning revelation," and argues that "creedalism," by which he means the acceptance of any creed, confession or dogma, is essentially divisive, whereas true revelation is unitive in its working. One may wonder whether revelation is always unitive in its working in a fallen world, and Dr. Wilburn's otherwise excellent interpretation of revelation does little to show why it should work

independently of creeds and confessions or a visible church any more than it works independently of Scripture. Indeed it does not take a linguistic analyst to see that there are some gaps in the argument bridged by "commitment phrases" like the following: "How long, O Lord, until the church manfully raises itself out of the quagmire of sectarianism and sees no creed but Christ?"

What this view implies for the doctrine of Church and Ministry is easily imagined. The ecumenical problem for Dr. Wilburn is essentially a battle between black and white: the "Catholic" or Hierarchical view, with its logical expression in the dogma of Papal Infallibility, and the "Protestant" or Functional view of which the logical expression is radical Congregationalism. A good deal is said about the need for humility, appreciation of others and comprehensiveness, the Protestant recovery of Catholicity and so on, but the solution of the ecumenical problem is quite clear: the "Catholics" must abandon their doctrinal and ecclesiastical absolutisms. When this is done, the obstacles "which have blocked the path to unity shall melt like the mist before the rising sun, and the glad day of organic unity will become an immanent possibility" (p. 265). The Protestants, for their part, must get over their various "fixations" about bishops, immersion, conciliar government, and so on. "It is high time that all Christian groups remove to the periphera (*sic*) all theological beliefs and all ecclesiastical practices which are blocking the pathway to a forthright and unqualified mutual recognition of the ministries and members of other groups" (p. 266). Not only Catholics but the vast majority of Protestants who gratefully accept the ecumenical creeds and their various confessions of faith as "subordinate standards" will be forced to regard this as a peculiarly frank statement of the programme of reunion by destruction.

One will heartily agree with much that is said in this book about the danger of doctrinal formulations becoming a substitute for a living faith, and of special rites and ceremonies or forms of organization becoming idols, but there is bound to be in the visible church some correlation between true faith on the one hand and essential doctrine and order on the other.

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The Western Response to Zoroaster (*The Ratanbai Katrak Lectures for 1956*). By J. DUCHESNE-GUILLEMIN. Oxford: University Press, 1958. Pp. 112. $3.75.

IN THE ARTICLE on *Religion* contributed to the *Legacy of Persia* (O.U.P., 1953, p. 152), I made the following statement: ". . . it is a disappointing but inescapable fact that close on a century of highly concentrated Iranian

scholarship has done little to clear the atmosphere of uncertaintly surrounding the whole development, practice, and 'climate' of the Zoroastrian faith." I went on to suggest that while much of the difficulty of the problem was undoubtedly intrinsic, as much again might well be due to the mechanistic, pseudo-scientific approach of so many workers in the Iranian field. Such scholars, many of whom bear an often dead weight of stupendous philological learning, might be not unjustly seen as a small remnant of forces who long invested the stronghold of Biblical studies; though many of them, to my certain knowledge, are not wholly unaware of modern positions in both religious and linguistic matters, they do not usually perceive therein any immediate relevance to their own studies.

A conspicuous exception to this general condemnation must be made in favour of the present Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford, R. C. Zaehner. Duchesne-Guillemin also stands somewhat apart, and in this present study he has elected to give a detached but evaluative account of the Zoroastrian aspect of Iranian research. On the whole he succeeds admirably well, though the story he tells only serves to confirm me in my view of the matter as expressed at the beginning of this notice.

There is a charming innocence about his opening paragraphs, in which he explains how he came to trace back the idea he had mistakenly supposed to be original in W. B. H. Henning, namely that the dualism of Zoroaster "is perhaps best understood as a protest against monotheism." He might, one conceives, with equal profit have asked himself what aberration led that scholar to entitle an important course of formal lectures by a designation worthy of provocative journalism: *Zoroaster, Politician or Witch Doctor?* In his fairminded and straight-forward account of the Dumézil v. Gershevitch controversy on the *Yashts* there are all the elements of restrained farce: "Ilya Gershevitch's edition and extensive commentary of the Mithra-yasht, now being printed at the Cambridge University Press, represents an approach in which all connection with Dumézil's work is carefully avoided." The field of Iranian studies is perhaps unique in its multiplication of shaky edifices, each built with an almost pathological concentration on the task in hand and with a studied disregard of similar activities carried on by others.

The author's own somewhat unimaginative approach (not that he would, possibly, regard imagination as an essential part of a scholar's make-up!) is best seen, perhaps, in his casual treatment of Lentz's "theory that the Gāthās had no linear continuity, that they represented only arbitrary recurrences of several themes, like Hāfiz's Odes or Mossadeq's speeches—which is, I venture to submit, tantamount to chaos." The conclusion may be valid, in which case it can serve as the first premise of a fresh and fruitful syllogism; or it may be invalid in the form stated, in which case the term "chaos" would bear re-examination. But the bare statement as made proves nothing beyond the fact that Duchesne-Guillemin does not like the idea

personally. The comparison with Hāfiz's Odes is just, and Lentz himself has publicly related his theory in another connection to my own hypothesis for Hāfiz's poetry; but the reference to the rantings of a notorious figure in modern Persian public life is quite out of place in a work of this kind.

So much for the bulk of the work, the first four chapters, which, if they do nothing else, will at least convince the layman that Iranologists are not yet ready to let him know, with even approximate unanimity, what they think of Zoroaster. More positively rewarding, albeit highly speculative, are the last two chapters, on *Iran and Greece* and *Iran, Israel, Gnosticism* respectively. The Bibliographical Index (of over seven pages) is an invaluable compilation.

The Postscript adds last-minute speculations on new theories and suggestions, some so fundamental as to represent a complete reversal of accepted ideas, though in the case of others the wheel is only coming full-circle once more. As the author concludes, "The West has not said its last word on Zoroaster."

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Jesus and His Coming. By J. A. T. Robinson. London: S.C.M. Press (Toronto: Ryerson Press), 1957. Pp. 192. $3.00.

Here is a stimulating and closely reasoned book which demands (and repays) careful and repeated study. It is an attempt to trace in the New Testament the emergence of the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ. This doctrine appears in almost every book of the New Testament, yet a number of recent studies have suggested that it has only a slender connexion with the teaching of Jesus about himself; what then is its source and what were the conditions in which it developed?

Dr. Robinson defines the Parousia doctrine as "the expectation of the coming of Christ from heaven to earth in a manifest and final glory" (is it so clear that the New Testament consistently speaks of a coming *to earth*? see, e.g., I Thess. 4:17), and he points out that to eliminate this hope from the teaching of Jesus does not involve the complete abandonment of futurist eschatology, since Jesus could speak of a coming judgment, the ingathering of the elect, and the end of all things, though without necessarily associating them with his own return. By a critical analysis of the Synoptic teaching, along the lines laid down by C. H. Dodd in *The Parables of the Kingdom*, he demonstrates that Jesus believed his own coming in his ministry to be the one great eschatological act of God and that all the sayings which the evangelists have taken to refer to a second coming referred originally to this

first decisive coming and to the crisis to which it led. He looked beyond his death only to the double consummation of his ministry in his imminent vindication by God and the visitation of God's judgment upon those who had rejected the Gospel of the Kingdom.

One reason why the early church misunderstood Jesus was that they confused prophetic eschatology with apocalyptic. "For the Prophets eschatology was a way of understanding history, the history in which they were living, *sub specie finis*: they looked out on the world scene and set it always in the light of the ultimate meaning and judgment of God. . . . But, with the Apocalyptists, eschatology developed into a subject in itself, a science of the End, a description—the more detailed the better—of what was going to happen hereafter, whether in history or beyond it" (pp. 94f). When the doctrine of the Second Coming first bursts upon us in I and II Thessalonians, after "the tunnel period" of A.D. 30–50, it is couched in thoroughly apocalyptic language, and we can trace a steady encroachment of apocalyptic on the Synoptic tradition, reaching its climax in Matthew. Mark's Gospel as it stands is dominated by the apocalyptic prediction of 13:24–7, but without these verses it is a consistent treatment of the ministry as Jesus himself envisaged it, with the vindication and the visitation that were to follow; and Dr. Robinson suggests that this may actually have been the way in which the Gospel was originally planned.

The growth of the Parousia doctrine, then, came about through an apocalyptic reinterpretation of the sayings of Jesus about the coming of the Son of Man, which originally referred to the visitation of God's judgment on Jerusalem, so that they became identified with the Old Testament expectation of the advent of the Lord. The process may have been assisted by a confusion in Christology, since Dr. Robinson finds in Acts 3:13–26 the vestiges of a primitive belief that Jesus was still only Messiah-designate and that his coming *as Messiah* was still in the future. The final chapter of the book undertakes to show that the eschatology of the Fourth Gospel is the most primitive of all.

This bald summary does much less than justice to an intricate argument, but it may serve to indicate its main outlines and the points at which it is likely to provoke controversy. It would seem that part at least of Dr. Robinson's problem is of his own making. For if it is the function of prophetic eschatology to set the present historical crisis in the light of God's final judgment of history, then it follows that to describe any event as eschatological is to make a statement not merely about that event but also about the End. The ultimate may illumine the present, but the known will also throw light upon the unknown. If Jesus was the centre of God's decisive eschatological act whereby he established his Kingdom in the midst of history, then Jesus must also be the centre of God's final act. The church was therefore committed to a Parousia hope as soon as it used eschatological language to describe the ministry of Jesus.

The distinction between prophetic and apocalyptic eschatology should not be allowed to pass unquestioned. The two best known Apocalypses—Daniel and Revelation—were written to set an historic crisis in the light of God's final judgment, and not from any merely speculative interest in the End. That apocalyptic language could be misunderstood by literalists and pedants in the first century as in the twentieth needs no proof. But that its original intention was different from that of the prophets is not so clear.

Eschatology was obviously as much part of the mental furnishing of the first century Christian as evolution is to the modern man. Ought we not then to allow for the possibility that the authors of the New Testament understood the meaning of eschatological language better than we, their modern interpreters, to whom it is a foreign language?

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BOOK NOTES

Basileia. By K. L. SCHMIDT, W. KLEINKNECHT, K. G. KUHN, and G. VON RAD (*Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* VII). London: Adam and Charles Black (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Can.), 1957. Pp. xiii, 61. $1.75.

THIS IS the seventh of a series of translations of key N.T. concepts discussed in the still unpublished *TWNT*. Very few scholars can afford the expensive original which is still appearing in fascicles (now in Vol. 6), since each complete volume costs about twenty dollars. Anyone interested in biblical eschatology must first of all consult Kittel. Unfortunately *basileia* ("kingdom") appeared before the last war at a time when the Qumran Scrolls had not yet been found. As a result a substantial postscript to this study would now have to be written to make the study complete.

Lord. By W. FOERSTER and G. QUELL. (*Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* VIII.). London: Adam and Charles Black (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada), 1958. Pp. xiv, 121. $2.50.

THIS IS another in the series of translations of articles from *TWNT*. Parts of this monograph are fairly technical, but students of biblical theology and exegesis will find this invaluable for understanding the Bible. The meaning of the concept of Lordship is traced through Hellenistic times ("Gods and Rulers as Kurioi"), and thereafter through Biblical times, starting with the term as a Septuagint translation of the O.T. *Yahweh* and *Adhon*, through the intertestamental period and Rabbinic Judaism, into the N.T.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Living Church. By C. G. Howie. Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press (Toronto: The Ryerson Press), 1958. Pp. 128. $2.50.

Dr. Howie, a former student of W. F. Albright and now a pastor of a Presbyterian church in San Francisco, wrote this little book because of many misapprehensions on the part of laymen concerning the effect of the Qumran discoveries on the Christian faith. The book is apparently intended for laymen who are quite confused about the whole matter rather than for the clergy or anyone who is at all knowledgeable about the Scrolls.

Reader in Comparative Religion: an Anthropological Approach. By W. A. Lassa and E. Z. Vogt. Evanston, Ill. and White Plains, N.Y.: Row, Peterson & Co., 1958. Pp. xiv, 598. $7.25.

This work is an anthology of sixty-seven articles on varied subjects ranging from "The Zuni Shalako Ceremony" by Edmund Wilson to an article on "Water Witching" by Evon Vogt. The articles are organized under the following headings: 1. The Origin and Development of Religions; 2. The Function of Religion in Human Society; 3. Myth and Ritual; 4. Mana and Taboo; 5. Totemism; 6. Magic, Witchcraft, and Divination; 7. The Magical Treatment of Illness; 8. Death, Ghosts, and Ancestor Worship; 9. Shaman and Priests; 10. Dynamics in Religion, and 11. Portraits of Religious Systems. Almost all of the articles deal with primitive religions and superstition rather than with any of the world religions. As such it constitutes an excellent source book for anthropologists.

J.W.W.

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